Stories and Story Telling

Edward Porter St. John

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Stories and Story-Telling
IN
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STORIES AND STORY-TELLING IN MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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TO

ALL TEACHERS

WHO ARE DISPOSED TO TAKE STORY-TELLING SERIOUSLY

INTRODUCTION

More and more, in these days, the leaders of educational thought are coming to recognize the significance of nature's informal means of training her children. Modern psychology finds in natural play a more valuable means of education than any pedagogical device ever formulated by a professional teacher, and points out that it is such because it is nature's own, because it leads to expression the mental and physical powers of the child and youth precisely as they mature, and in the exact ways that ages of racial experience have shown to be most valuable to man. So it begins to recognize in story-telling the earliest, the simplest, and so far as moral influence is concerned, the most universally effective means of impressing upon a new generation the lessons that have been learned by those who have gone before.

It has no charm of novelty, but it is only the shallow mind that discredits the old because it is old. Nature is chief of all conservatives. The things that had large influence in shaping man's individual nature or his social customs she never wholly discards. Man's oldest possessions are the really indispensable ones. The traits that served the race in its infancy are the ones that mark the unfolding life of every child, and though they may withdraw themselves from casual notice during the active years of maturity the fact that they again force themselves into prominence in old age and are the last to fail in the final dissolution is evi-

dence that, unnoticed, they have served their purpose during the intervening years.

Such a place as this story-telling has in the education of the race. Long before teachers or text-books appeared instruction was given in story form to the children who gathered about the mother's knee. Youths, grouped about their elders before the evening camp-fire, thrilled to the story of old deeds of valor and braced their souls to vie with the heroes who had won the admiration of their fathers' fathers. Modern mothers, not knowing why they do it, use the same magic to gain the same ends. The great German prophet of childhood gave the story a large and honored place in the rarely wise and successful institution which he founded. From time to time prophet and sage, preacher and statesman have made it their tool for the shaping of human conduct and character.

So instinct and genius have made it their method in the past. Now, perhaps more consciously and thoughtfully than ever before, teachers are seeking to make it a part of their equipment. In the field of moral and religious education this movement is beginning to be felt, yet not as deeply or as widely as it should be. The Sunday-school, our special institution for moral and religious culture, has not made as large use of the method as has the home and the public school (at least in the kindergarten), and in all three of these institutions what has been attempted has been chiefly with the younger children. With such it is almost the only method to be used. With the older pupils other means of influence are available, but this one never loses its power if it be used with tactful adaptation to changing interests and motives. It has its large place in dealing with the adolescent, and with the adult as well.

These brief chapters have been prepared with the

desire to aid parents, teachers, and workers in settlements, vacation schools, and less formal agencies of moral education who are as yet unskilled in the use of stories. The instruction given is designedly elementary in its nature, and always keeps in mind the aim of character-building. The plans suggested are offered with less of diffidence because they have been tested in the class-room for a number of years with satisfactory results. More than a few, some of whom had never attempted to tell a story, have under their guidance developed unusual skill as story-tellers, both as entertainers and as teachers.

The writer has sought to acquaint himself with the readily accessible literature of the subject and with the desire to be helpful rather than to be original has availed himself of helpful suggestions wherever he found them. He desires especially to mention his personal indebtedness to Dr. Walter L. Hervey's *Picture Work*. The fact that no adequate discussion of the use of stories for purposes of moral and religious education has yet appeared is sufficient justification of the present modest effort.

The chapters may be read in a few hours, and it is hoped not wholly without profit to those who have already served their apprenticeship. To those who use the book in that way the writer offers no apology for hints at the close of each chapter which savor of the text-book; for beginners, for whom it is especially designed, can not afford to omit study and persistent practise.

Since story-telling always implies an audience, co-operative work will be especially helpful. A teacher-training class or a story club will afford opportunity for mutual observation and criticism and for discussion and exchange of story material, and will multiply the value of study of the book. One of the best means of

securing such an opportunity is through the organization of a local branch of the National Story-Tellers' League, information concerning which may be obtained by addressing *The Story Tellers'* Magazine which is published at the office of the League, 27 West 23rd St., New York City.

In such groups parents, Sunday-school and public school teachers, kindergartners, and young people often unite with advantage to all. After the first meetings, which should be made as easy as possible for the beginners, programs may be arranged which will lead the members into new fields and enlarge their repertories as their skill increases. In such a scheme successive meetings might be devoted, for example, to modern fairy-tales, hero stories, Norse myths, folk-tales of the East, Christmas stories, myths and folk-tales of the American Indians, humorous stories, love stories, stories of the medieval saints, Thanksgiving stories, animal stories, fables, stories from history, etc. The interests of the members would determine the selection of the topics and their grouping in an orderly way.

In every group so formed the writer wishes that he might have a listener's place.

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The child's thirst for stories, — has it no significance, and does it not lay a responsibility upon us?

WALTER L. HERVEY.

Stories and Story-Telling

IN

Moral and Religious Education

CHAPTER I

THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF THE STORY

All the world loves a story, but, after all, few have learned to take story-telling seriously. Every heart responds to the charm of a well-told tale, but even among teachers comparatively few have realized that usually there are moral forces among those feelings that are stirred. When stories have been told for any purpose beyond that of mere entertainment, commonly it has been as the first step in literary training, or simply to call back the wandering attention of the pupil to a lesson that is essentially dull. Still, such stories as have been used have had their secret influence, and character has been shaped for good or ill. In every age, however, really great teachers who have had character-building as a conscious aim have known the value of the story and have made it a most effective means of shaping the lives of both old and young. Jesus, Plutarch, the monks of the Middle Ages, Froebel, and the kindergartners of to-day have not failed of accomplishing their aim.

"Good story-telling is the best intellectual qualification of the teacher," our greatest educationist has said. If he had the teacher of children in mind there is no exaggeration. Of the teacher of youth and of the

average of adults it is almost equally true, so far as moral influence is concerned.

The very origin of story-telling was in the teaching impulse. Its chief significance throughout the long past of primitive life, when it was almost the only form of literature, was certainly educational. Events which were fraught with meaning were kept alive in memory and handed down from one generation to another that they might help to shape the life of youth. In this way men gave the warning of the certain penalty which nature inflicts upon those who break her laws. So they sought to stir the sleeping spirit of hero-worship and aspiration. Aside from purely unconscious imitation the story is almost the only pedagogical means used by primitive men. And as we trace the development of human culture we find that it does not lose its place in the higher stages.

Every race has its heritage of folk-tales and myths that have a far larger meaning than the mere entertainment of the young. Scientists study these stories of the past with painstaking care, because they reveal the genius of the people. Not only do they reflect the ideals which have shaped the social and religious life, but they have shaped those ideals and have given them form and power. As factors in molding character the stories of the gods are not less important than the rites of worship.

China, India, Arabia, Japan, honored the story-teller: they felt his charm and were molded by his magic. For centuries the stories of Homer formed the only literary content of education among the Greeks, and they kept their place through the succeeding years of a culture that we hardly equal to-day. When Roman education was at its best, stories of their national heroes and statesmen such as we find in Plutarch's *Lives* formed

one of the most important parts of the curriculum. How largely the Hebrew life was shaped by story a glance at the Old Testament will reveal.

All the long line of skalds, jongleurs, and bards of the European peoples were story-tellers in the truest sense. All their songs were of the ballad-epic type. Music and verse were the adornments of the tale, and indeed served a more practical purpose than that, as they were an aid to memory before the songs were committed to writing — a device which many of us remember from the days when we sang the multiplication tables in the arithmetic class or the Palestine geography song in the Sunday-school. The minnesingers and troubadours sang chiefly of love and with them versification and music came to receive more emphasis. On the other hand the minstrels of the age of chivalry with their songs of noble deeds were honored for their influence upon character, and had a recognized place in the educational system of feudalism.

In our own days and among our own people the story still manifests its power. In more lines than one Dickens was most effectively a reformer. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* outweighed in influence thousands of sermons and tens of thousands of pages of antislavery tracts a generation ago. *Ramona* and *Black Beauty* have not been without their practical influence. Who will dare to say that all the books on ethics have influenced American life as much as the product of the novelist's pen?

From the very first the Christian Church has utilized this power. The stories of the Gospels have done infinitely more to influence the lives of men than all the books of systematic theology that the Church has produced in twenty centuries of time. The stories of the saints that arose during the Middle Ages were not without their meaning and their power. In the midst of bar-

ren asceticism and scholastic wrangling they kept simple faith alive and stirred the longing for fellowship with God. The preachers of our own day who have had widespread popular influence have been those who have not scorned the story-teller's art. No one forgets the stories of a Moody, a Talmage, or a Spurgeon, and thousands have been unable to close their hearts against the messages that those stories brought.

Jesus was a master story-teller. He did not invent the parable; the rabbis used it constantly; but so skilful was his use of this device that in our thought it is associated almost wholly with his name. As we shall see, his stories were marvels of perfection both in form and use. When we study them we do not wonder that the common people heard him gladly. It is not strange that the stories impressed his followers so strongly that many of them found place in the record of his life and teaching. Nor was it only for those throngs that followed him among the hills of Palestine that those stories were voiced. Most of us feel that we have gained our clearest and most impressive knowledge of his teachings from those parables or from the simple account of his life which is *The Story* of the Gospels. When we wish to minister to a needy heart we commonly turn to that story of his life or to one of those other stories that he told.

In other ways our own attitude toward the Bible is significant. A test as to the extent to which the content of the book has impressed itself upon the average member of the Sunday-school will give telling evidence. Examine any class, old or young, on the concrete content and moral teaching of the book of Genesis; then repeat the test with the prophecy of Jeremiah. Or test the knowledge of 1 Samuel as compared with that of Isaiah or Colossians. The fact that many more of our Sunday-school lessons have been chosen from the historical than

from the prophetical or doctrinal books does not weaken the evidence, for that fact must be explained. Few would contend that the moral and religious teachings of Genesis and 1 Samuel are higher than those of the prophets and apostles. More lessons are chosen from those books because they contain more material of real educational value for the average mind. They are full of stories. The very fact of their selection is a strong, if unconscious, tribute to the value of the story as a pedagogical device.

The loss of a love for stories may be the result of sophistication, but it is not an evidence of wisdom. To feel contempt for their use reveals ignorance of the art of education. The conscientious teacher will hardly be content to say, "I cannot tell a story." He will make himself a teller of tales. This is his duty and his opportunity, and when he has mastered the simple art it will be his joy as well.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Stories are the oldest form of transmitted culture, and the most formative. — *Richard G. Moulton.*

The household story was the earliest ethical study in the educational curriculum of the race. — *Quoted by Nora Archibald Smith.*

Every fairy-tale worth reading at all is a remnant of a tradition possessing true historical value; historical at least in so far as it has naturally arisen out of the mind of a people under special circumstances, and risen not without meaning, nor removed altogether from the sphere of religious truth. — *John Ruskin.*

The Pueblo child does not receive commands to do or to refrain from doing without the reason for the command being given in the form of a story, in which the given action is portrayed with the good or evil resulting to the doer. — *F. C. Spencer.*

STORIES AND STORY-TELLING

The narrative which extends from Genesis to Esther is found, in its literary analysis, to be an alternation between two forms: a framework and connective tissue of history, with the high lights and spiritual essence of the whole given by brilliant stories. — *Richard G. Moulton.*

I would rather be the children's story-teller than the queen's favorite or the king's counsellor. — *Kate Douglas Wiggin.*

Let me tell the stories and I care not who writes the text-books. — *G. Stanley Hall.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

Consider what stories that you have heard or read have largely influenced your life. Do not overlook any whether long or short, whether fiction, biography, history, or the informal story of another life. Most stories that have deeply impressed you will be found to have had an appreciable influence.

Ask your acquaintances for similar facts from their own experience. If you belong to a story-teller's league or to a club or class that is making a study of story-telling, discuss these facts freely. Notice how some stories that would now be rejected because of literary imperfections were morally helpful to the members during their childhood.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

The value of the story attested by

a. Its origin.
b. Its use by many peoples.
c. Its influence in social reforms.
d. Its place in Christian teaching.
e. Its use by Jesus.
f. Its influence in our own lives.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

Sara Wiltse, *The Story in Early Education*, pp. 1–3.
G. Stanley Hall, *Sunday-school and Bible Teaching*, Pedagogical Seminary, Vol. VIII, pp. 448–450.

Nora Archibald Smith, *The Children of the Future*, pp. 101–104.
Ezra Allen, *The Pedagogy of Myth in the Grades*, Pedagogical Seminary, Vol. VIII, pp. 258–277.
S. B. Haslett, *The Pedagogical Bible School*, pp. 241–244.
William Byron Forbush, *Manual of Stories*, pp. 3–16.
E. N. and G. E. Partridge, *Story Telling in Home and School*, pp. 3–23, 77–86, 117–147.
Walter Taylor Field, *Fingerposts to Children's Reading*, pp. 9–36.
Angela M. Keyes, *Stories and Story Telling*, pp. 4–12.

CHAPTER II

WHAT A STORY REALLY IS

NOTHING, one would think, is less in need of definition than a story; yet many fail of success in story-telling precisely because they do not know in what a story consists. Description and exposition are related literary forms with which the story is sometimes confused.

Description deals chiefly with things, and seeks to give definiteness of impression by adding details to details. The story finds its material in events, and especially in action: it presents the movement as flowing toward one end and in its impression emphasizes the wholes of conduct.

The purpose of exposition is to make clear by explanation. Accuracy and orderliness are the essential qualities. As in the case of description it lacks the consistent and unified action which characterizes the story.

Both of these forms appear at times in the story, but always in a subordinate place. Sometimes substantially the same material may be presented in different literary forms. For example, the Twenty-third Psalm approaches description in its form, though it is expository in its nature. William Allen Knight's *Song of Our Syrian Guest* is an exposition of the psalm. Miss Cragin's *Lost Lamb* presents the same general material in story form.

The very words suggest that history and story have much in common, but they are not the same. History

is a form of narrative, but it appeals especially to the sense of reality and of the connectedness of things. It is essentially a record of events that have an importance in themselves, and it makes much of their mutual relations and their causes and consequences. The story makes its appeal chiefly to the imagination and the feelings. Imaginary events can never become history, but certain events of history may become story if they are so presented as to make their appeal to the feelings. History suggests the clashing of nations, the progress of civilization, successive changes through long periods of time. The story implies unity, completion, and limitation to a comparatively narrow field.

A story, then, may be said to be a narrative of true or imaginary events which form a vitally related whole, so presented as to make its appeal chiefly to the emotions rather than the intellect. Each one of these characteristics, as we shall see, contributes directly to the power of the story as an educational device.

A closer analysis of the literary form that the story takes reveals certain essential elements that are common to every tale. All successful story-tellers, though they may be untrained, recognize them, and consciously or unconsciously observe certain rules in connection with their use. Only as the teacher conforms to these natural requirements can he effectively use the story as a means to an end in moral education. However strong he may be in argument or exposition, if he does not appreciate these fundamental characteristics of the story, he is at as great a disadvantage as the workman who knows the qualities of no metals save copper and lead when he is asked to shape a tool from steel.

In every story provision must be made for four elements: the beginning, a succession of events, the climax, and the end. Each serves its peculiar purpose, and that

it may do it effectively must be shaped with that end in view.

Every story of necessity has a beginning; but though it cannot be omitted it may easily be bungled. And it is as true of story-telling as of racing that a bad start often means a handicap that cannot be overcome. It is because so few persons consider the way a story begins a matter of importance that so many fail at just this point.

The beginning of a story corresponds to the formal step of preparation in teaching a lesson. Its function is in part to introduce and characterize the leading person or persons, and sometimes to provide a background for the action. But aside from this preparation for the facts of the story it is especially desirable that it should arouse interest, and often it adds much to the story's power if it gives a hint of the line of thought that is to be developed, or if it awakens the kind of feeling that the dénouement is to stir.

One invariable rule may guide the novice here, — the shorter this introductory step, the better, provided it accomplishes its purpose. Long explanations are tiresome, especially when they are given before there is anything to explain. We all remember how we used to omit not only the preface and introduction, but as well the opening chapters of certain historical novels. If our custom has changed, it is because we seek more than the story now. Let us not forget that the writer gives his audience an option here that one who tells his stories cannot. It is safest to assume that the story is what the hearer wants.

In our youthful days we sometimes found stories of another sort. How we delighted in those that plunged us at once into the midst of excitement and mystery, and allowed us to gather by the way as much of explana-

tion as the progress of the story demanded! These are better models. In such stories as the teacher uses it is commonly best to begin where the story does.

Much that is usually given in the form of introduction may better be conveyed by the use of adjectives and qualifying phrases or bits of description introduced in connection with the action of the story. If it is not possible to depend upon this method alone, a very few sentences will usually suffice for the introductory matter if the step has been thoughtfully planned.

The sequence of events presents the movement of the story toward the climax which gives meaning to the whole. The great essential is that it shall be orderly, presenting the necessary facts step by step, and preparing for the climax without revealing it in advance. Here the beginner is often at fault. The story seems to be progressing smoothly when suddenly with evident confusion the narrator says, "Oh, I forgot to tell you," etc. The loss is not simply in artistic effect. Attention is directed to this particular item; it is evident that it is essential, and at once the hearer attempts to foresee the end. Whether the attempt is successful or not there is a distraction of attention and much of the force of the story is lost.

The climax is that which makes the story; for it all that precedes has prepared the way. It is the point upon which interest focuses. If a moral lesson is conveyed, it is here that it is enforced. Hence failure here means total failure. The reason why the "good story" sometimes seems so dull when it is related by an appreciative hearer is that he has missed the point in retelling it. It is for this that the story exists, and skill in dealing with it counts more for success than at any other point.

In each story the needs of the particular case will

determine the mode of procedure, but some general hints may be given. The climax must not be missed, for without it there is no story. Whatever tends to obscure it or weaken its force lessens the story's power. Usually it is more impressive if there is something of surprise involved; with the humorous story this is absolutely essential. If the story is to leave a moral impression, the moral lesson must depend upon the climax itself.

Important as the climax is, if one has the moral aim in view the way in which the story is to end needs careful consideration. First of all it should appear that the story has really arrived at the stopping place. Thus far event has succeeded event, and the outcome has been in doubt. Until the final issue of a course of conduct appears, no effective moral lesson can be based upon it.

Again, while the attention is centered on an unsolved problem there can be no meditation on what has gone before. The nickel novel that closes with the hero clinging to a snapping branch that extends over a precipice two hundred feet in height does not defeat its purpose, for the aim is to sell another book; but if one would have a story teach a lesson, the mind must be left at rest, ready to turn back and think again of the deeper meaning of the tale. This ending of a story, however, must not be confused with the appending of a " moral ": that would serve to put an end to the interest of the hearer rather than to the action of the tale.

Every good model enforces the rule that is indicated above. The fairy-tale ends with the classic phrase, " And they lived happily ever after." In the average novel it is when the villain dies and the hero wins his bride that the story ends. True, there may be a strenuous life awaiting the wedded pair, but " that is another story."

Sometimes the amateur's story wanders on and on simply because he feels that it has not come to an end.

It is related that a child developed remarkable skill as a story-teller, except that she did not know how to stop. When the climax had been successfully passed she would add inconsequential details because, while she had nothing more to say, she felt that the story had not ended. At last she discovered an effectual way of bringing her stories to a close, and in future they ended with some such formula as this, — "And one beautiful morning, as they were walking down the path to the front gate, they all died."

Most of us have at times wished that certain of our acquaintances had as keen and true a sense of the fitness of things as this child. Teachers who lack this instinct can improve their work by thoughtfully planning the story's end. In a short story in which few characters appear the climax may itself form the fitting close, but often a sentence or two must be added to give the sense of completion that enables the story to do its work.

To summarize, every good story must have a beginning that rouses interest, a succession of events that is orderly and complete, a climax that forms the story's point, and an end that leaves the mind at rest. Or, to put it in another way, the story has a hero, action, a plot, and a solution.

The power quickly and accurately to analyze a story into these essential elements is the most fundamental and the most important part of the story-teller's theoretical training. It offers the certain means of determining whether a story is worth telling at all. It makes its retention by the memory a comparatively simple matter. It makes it easy to condense a story that is too long, and facilitates the successful expansion of one that is too brief. The importance of persistent drill in the performing of this process can hardly be over-emphasized.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

The chief reason why some people cannot tell stories is because they have no story to tell. — *Anna Buckland.*

Historical narrative, for instance, usually has an explanatory purpose; it does not merely recite certain events; it explains their sequence, their relations, their causes and effects.

We read *Robinson Crusoe* or *Ivanhoe* or Mrs. Gaskell's *Cranford* or Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, not for information, but in order to be stirred or aroused. — *Gardiner, Kittredge, and Arnold.*

Merely to string a series of incidents together is not to tell a story. Much of the effect of the story depends upon the grouping of the incidents; the setting of the telling points in strong light and duly subordinating minor details. — *Marvin R. Vincent.*

The essential thing in narrative is to make something happen. — *Gardiner, Kittredge, and Arnold.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

Study carefully half a dozen or more of good stories, analyzing them to determine the essential elements as indicated above. First of all decide what forms the climax. It will be difficult for the beginner to do this in some cases, but he should persist. Discuss difficult points at the story club or with your friends. Note the series of events leading up to the climax. Could any of them be omitted? Is this order necessary? Note the way in which the story is introduced and the way it ends. Could either beginning or ending be improved? Practise on condensing stories without omitting any essential points. Write out some short story from memory and then compare your version with the original, as to the way in which these four elements are dealt with in each case.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

1. The story distinguished from
   a. Description.

b. Exposition.
c. History.

2. The elements of the story:
   a. The beginning.
   b. The action.
   c. The climax.
   d. The end.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

Gardiner, Kittredge, and Arnold, *Manual of Composition and Rhetoric*, pp. 5–78.

Richard G. Moulton, *The Art of Telling Bible Stories*. Report of Second Convention of the Religious Education Association, p. 26.

Sara Cone Bryant, *How to Tell Stories*, pp. 57–82.

Walter L. Hervey, *Picture Work*, pp. 34–35.

William Byron Forbush, *Manual of Stories*, pp. 28–35.

Carolyn Sherwin Bailey, *For the Story Teller*, pp. 41, 104.

Numerous books on the technique of the short story offer valuable hints as to the significance and management of the story-elements. Among those most likely to be helpful to the teacher are those named below.

Evelyn May Albright, *The Short Story*, The Macmillan Co., N. Y., 1913, pp. 260, $.90.

J. Berg Eisenwein, *Writing the Short Story*, Hinds, Noble & Eldredge, N. Y. 1908, pp. 441, $1.25.

Studying the Short Story, 1912, pp. 438, same publisher and price.

Charles Raymond Barrett, *Short Story Writing*, The Baker & Taylor Co., N. Y. 1900, pp. 257, $1.00.

Walter B. Pitkin, *Short Story Writing*, The Macmillan Co., N. Y. 1912, $1.25.

Leslie W. Quirk, *How to Write a Short Story*, The Editor Co., Ridgewood, N. J. 1911, pp. 77, $.50

CHAPTER III

THE USE OF IDEALISTIC STORIES

THE stories which we may use for purposes of moral and religious education may be grouped in two great classes, with several subdivisions under each. These classes may be distinguished as the idealistic and the realistic stories. The first group includes those that are recognized as imaginary in origin or which take liberties with facts, but which embody and set forth principles or truths; the second is made up of those that are or profess to be strictly conformed to fact. The two kinds of stories make their impressions upon the moral nature in somewhat different ways, and that they may be most helpful the distinction between them must be kept clearly in mind by the teacher and certain points must be guarded in the use of each.

Because they are untrue to fact many of the first group are often considered unsuitable for use by the teacher of morals, but a very little thoughtful consideration will show that they have great moral value, and that a large part of their special power is due to this very characteristic. The departure from prosaic and temporary fact is that the ideal and eternal truth may be more strongly emphasized. Events are related that could not possibly have happened, but it does not follow that the tale must have a vicious influence.

Among the important forms of idealistic stories are fairy- and folk-tales, myths, legends, fables, and alle-

gories. Most of these have a moral content, and indeed a moral aim was usually responsible for their origin. The others should be discarded by the teacher of morals, or should be carefully edited with the moral aim in mind.

Most fairy-tales and folk-tales, whether they are modern in origin or, as is true with most of the children's favorites, have come down to us from a very distant past, have this distinctly moral quality, which appears in the fact that virtue is rewarded and wrong-doing receives its punishment. This, the critic will object, is true of real life as well. So much may be granted, but we must remember that "the mills of God grind slowly," and that frequently the child is unable to trace the relation between cause and effect in such cases.

Nature's penalties are sure, but often one must wait a lifetime to see their completion, while sometimes it is upon the next generation that they fall most heavily. When the retribution falls it is often of a kind that the child or untutored adult cannot appreciate in advance.

In fairy-land, on the other hand, penalty quickly follows offense, and is of a kind that strongly appeals to the motives that influence a child. Hence oftentimes a fairy-tale points a moral more effectively than a story drawn from real life. If there is a valid principle back of the lesson taught there is no danger of moral loss when the child reaches the critical age, unless the story has been presented as one of the realistic type. Children find as much pleasure in stories which they know are the product of another's fancy as they do in playthings which by the power of their own imagination they transform into something very different from what they are.

A myth is in its origin an idea which has been clothed with a poetic garb of fiction. While it is an interpretation of some phenomenon of nature, it is an explanation in terms of human motives and hence has a moral content.

It is an attempt at scientific explanation by those who are so unsophisticated as to attribute anthropomorphic personality and motives to all objects about them, which means that it is really a search for principles underlying human conduct. In this sphere the judgments passed are usually true and of real importance.

There is a peculiar charm about the classic myths that gives them special teaching power. This is largely due to the fact that they appeal to those elemental feelings which are common to all men, and which have the dominant place in the lives of primitive races and of children. There is also a special picturesqueness and charm of form which they owe to the fact that they were long preserved in oral form before they were committed to writing. Handed down for many centuries by word of mouth, filtered through the minds of scores of generations, they have been subjected to a continual process of testing and elimination of elements that do not appeal to interest and conform to popular ethical standards until a certain measure of perfection of form and content has been attained.

So great is the charm of the Greek myths, for example, and so strongly do they appeal to the interests of children and youth, that it is with real regret that many teachers have put them aside because of the moral imperfections of the gods and the polytheistic conceptions with which they are filled. They are right in putting the moral and religious results above all others that are involved, and, from the days of Plato on, many educators have felt the same necessity and have reached the same conclusion. But the rejection of all these stories is not as essential as it seems at first thought. The elimination of such of the stories as cannot be so edited as to remove accounts of the grosser forms of immorality and to emphasize the fact that vice and virtue meet their certain rewards meets

the ethical requirement. The gods of the Greeks were only men of superhuman powers, and the stories of their lives have the same educational values as others of the ideal type.

The polytheistic element still remains as an objection on the side of religious education, but it may be readily overcome. One may introduce the myth by saying, "You know, children, that our Father in heaven made the earth and everything about us, and that he takes care of us all. Many years ago there were people who had never heard of this; but when they looked out upon the beautiful world and saw the sun rising every morning, and the stars shining at night, and the flowers blooming, and the fruits ripening in the trees, they knew that some one must care for all of these. Since they did not know of the one great God who can do all things they thought that there must be one god for the sun and one for the stars, another for the flowers and still another for the fruits. I am going to tell you of some of the things that they thought these gods did." When one has finished the story he may add, "That is the way they told it long ago, but we know that it is really our Father in heaven who cares for all the creatures that he has made." So the thought of those old days may stir the simple religious feelings of the child — the wonder and love and dread and trust that he shares with the men of that early age — and that without giving him wrong conceptions of God.

Fables are stories in which animals, plants, and even inanimate things are given the characteristics of men, that lessons of a moral or utilitarian character may be presented in interesting and telling form. They usually point out the weaknesses and foibles of men, and are chiefly of value for purposes of warning.

In allegory there is always a meaning which lies be-

neath the surface of the story, and which is never explicitly stated. Usually the story is longer and more involved than in the case of fable, and it appeals to more highly developed intellectual powers. It may be distinguished from the fairy-tale, the myth, and the legend by the fact that throughout the tale there is a substitution of one thing for another. For example, a human quality or characteristic may be personified as in *Pilgrim's Progress* or George Macdonald's *Lilith*. Some fables and some modern fairy-tales might be classed with allegory.

Legend is story which is based upon fact, but in which event or personality has been magnified in the process of oral transmission through long periods of time. This change is unconsciously made, and usually is the result of the tendency to emphasize really important facts or truths. Hence it is usually true that the fictitious element is associated with the real point of the story and serves to strengthen the high lights and deepen the shadows, thus making the story more effective for its teaching purpose — provided the teacher does not insist that it is a relation of fact. Legend helps to bridge the gap between the fairy-tale and real history, and to bring about the correlation of feeling and fact.

Stories in which human thought and feeling have been attributed to the lives of the lower animals have been branded as "sham natural history," and have been severely attacked by men of scientific spirit. If these are told as realistic stories the criticism is well warranted both from the standpoint of natural history and from that of pedagogy. But if treated as fiction, if presented as fairy-tales and legends should be, they may serve a useful purpose in moral education, for they appeal to the spontaneous interests of childhood, and they awaken sympathies that tend to

guide the child's conduct not only toward these creatures but toward human beings as well.

In all the cases cited above, unless it be the last, it will be observed that the departure from fact has been with the conscious or unconscious aim to set forth a truth with greater emphasis. If tactfully used such stories need not be misleading. Even a child can realize that a story may be fictitious without being false. If told with emphasis upon their inner meaning, and with no insistence upon literal fact or correctness of detail, they will often carry their messages more effectively than exact records of the actual happenings of life. So the teacher may seek with confidence for valuable material among the stories of this class.

The one essential for idealistic stories is not that they should be true, but that they should clearly and impressively set forth a truth.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

The story of the Ugly Duckling is much truer than many a statement of fact. — *Sara Cone Bryant.*

There is no more deadly enemy to spiritual truth than prosaic literalness. — *Louise Seymour Houghton.*

Fact is at best but a garment of truth which has ten thousand changes of raiment woven in the same loom. — *George Macdonald.*

The genuine fairy-tale always represents, in the play of the imagination, a deep moral content; for its root is the poetic side of the mind, which clothes a higher truth in visible shapes and delivers it in the form of a story. — *William Rein.*

It is not the gay forms that he meets in the fairy-tale which charm the child, but a spiritual, invisible truth lying far deeper. — *Friedrich Froebel.*

The proper function of fancy in intellectual life is spirituality. Spiritual truths are hidden in the precious honey of stories. — *Colonel Parker.*

There are grown-up people now who say that the (fairy) stories are not good for children because they are not true . . . and because people are killed in them, especially wicked giants. But probably you who read these stories know very well how much is true and how much is only make-believe, and I never yet heard of a child who killed a very tall man merely because Jack killed the giants. . . . I am not afraid that you will be afraid of the magicians and dragons; besides you see that a really brave child was always their master, even in the height of their power. — *Andrew Lang.*

The mere fact that a thing has existed for a thousand or two thousand years is not always proof that it is worth preserving. But the fact that after having been repeated for two thousand years a story still possesses a perfectly fresh attraction for a child of to-day, does indeed prove that there is in it something of imperishable worth. — *Felix Adler.*

The moral ideas inculcated by the fables are usually of a practical, worldly wisdom sort, not high ideals of moral quality, not virtue for its own sake, but varied examples of the results of rashness and folly. This is, perhaps, one reason why they are so well suited to the immature moral judgments of children. — *Charles A. McMurray.*

The peculiar value of the fables is that they are instantaneous photographs, which reproduce, as it were, in a single flash of light, some one aspect of human nature, and which excluding everything else, permit the entire attention to be fixed on that one. — *Felix Adler.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

Select five of the most popular fairy-tales and carefully study their moral influence. If it is harmful note whether the harm can be eliminated without weakening the force of the story. Study one of the most interesting myths that you know with a view to its possible use with children. If it seems suitable, try it and note the effect. Study Hawthorne's *Wonder Tales* and Kingsley's *Greek Heroes* to aid in adaptation. Re-examine Æsop's fables and test their value with children and adults. Recall your attitude toward *Pilgrim's Progress.* At what

age was it most interesting? Did you at that time realize its allegorical meaning? Study one or two of the legends of the saints and one or two of the King Arthur stories, and test their value with youth and adults.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

1. The nature of idealistic stories.
2. The source of moral influence in
   a. The fairy-tale.
   b. The myth.
   c. The fable and allegory.
   d. The legend.
3. The danger point in the use of idealistic stories.
4. The one essential pedagogical requirement.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

Felix Adler, *The Moral Instruction of Children*, Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 10.
Edward Howard Griggs, *Moral Education*, pp. 236–247.
Anna Buckland, *The Use of Stories in the Kindergarten*, pp. 8–12.
Sara Cone Bryant, *How to Tell Stories*, pp. 13–25.
Alexander F. Chamberlain, *Folk Lore in the Schools*, Pedagogical Seminary, Vol. VII, pp. 347–356. (Includes bibliography.)
William Byron Forbush, *Manual of Stories*, pp. 87–110.
Richard T. Wyche, *Some Great Stories and How to Tell Them*, pp. 11–39.
Carolyn Sherwin Bailey, *For the Story Teller*, pp. 212–230.
E. N. and G. E. Partridge, *Story Telling for Home and School*, pp. 44–57, 61–64.
Edna Lyman, *Story Telling*, pp. 174–225.
Edwin S. Hartland, *The Science of Fairy Tales*, pp. 2–173.
Walter Taylor Field, *Fingerposts to Children's Reading*, pp. 81–114.
Julia Darrow Cowles, *The Art of Story-Telling*, pp. 15–75.

CHAPTER IV

REALISTIC STORIES AND HOW TO USE THEM

STORIES from history and biography, personal reminiscences, true stories of animals, and all others that profess to be accounts of actual happenings belong to this class. They have a special value because besides suggesting a principle they also indicate how it may receive specific application in life. The deeds of the Christian martyrs and of the modest heroes of every-day life have a certain power which is beyond that of the most beautiful myth. The story of what Jesus did means more than all the visions of all the prophets. It is only because we cannot always find true stories that enforce the desired lesson effectively that those which are the product of the imagination are sometimes preferred.

In these studies attention was directed to the idealistic stories first because they often furnish better examples of the story type. Because they are stories from the first, and only stories, they are less likely to be complicated with other literary forms. The fact that our realistic stories are often taken from history, biography, or natural history tends to favor the retention of facts that are not of value for our use, or leads to undue emphasis upon what should have only an incidental or subordinate place.

Hence we must carefully guard the selection of material in planning a story of this type. A narration of facts is not necessarily a story. Here, as with stories of the other type, there must be a beginning, a succession of

events, a climax, and an end. The facts must be so presented as to make the appeal to the emotions; and especially the unity of the story must be observed. One choice must be traced to its result, one act to its outcome, one germinal impulse to its fruition. Each life is compounded of a thousand elements that will never appear in just that combination again; hence no man can order his life after another. But the story brings before the hearer one of the little entities which make up the complex. Certain elements, common to all lives, are isolated that they may speak their message to every mind and heart. Separated from the many non-essential or less significant circumstances, the lesson of one slowly growing passion or one unconsidered deed stands clearly forth.

Valuable as realistic stories are, if the really significant facts are emphasized and the non-essential elements are eliminated, there is one caution that the teacher of morals must always keep in mind when they are used. If such stories are to be effective, they must not only be true but must seem to be true. *It is not the startling and unusual, but rather that which does not test credulity that is impressive here.*

In the idealistic story, which does not pretend to be true, the wildest extravagances may really add to its effectiveness, but when a story which claims to be true stirs a doubt in the hearer's mind, that element of distrust tends to be carried over to the lesson which it is designed to impress. An illustration will be more convincing than many arguments. The author of a popular book on personal religion emphasizes the necessity of keeping heart and mind in touch with God if the life is to possess spiritual power. In presenting the thought he uses an illustration which describes a town in the arid region of Colorado.

"Some enterprising citizens," he says, "ran a pipe up the hills to a lake of clear, sweet water. As a result the town enjoyed a bountiful supply of water the year round without being dependent upon the doubtful rainfall. And the population increased and the place had quite a Western boom. One morning the housewives turned the water spigots, but no water came. . . . The men climbed the hill. There was the lake as full as ever. They examined around the pipes as well as possible, but could find no break. Try as they might they could find no cause for stoppage. And as the days grew into weeks, people commenced moving away again, the grass grew in the streets, and the prosperous town was going back to its old sleepy condition when one day one of the town officials received a note. It was poorly written, with bad spelling and grammar, but he never cared less about writing and grammar than just then. It said in effect: 'Ef you'll jes' pull the plug out of the pipe about eight inches from the top you'll get all the water you want.' Up they started for the top of the hill, and examining the pipe, found the plug which some vicious tramp had inserted. . . . Out came the plug; down came the water freely; by and by back came prosperity."

Having read the illustration, analyze your own mental reaction to it. The message which the author is trying to teach is an important one, but many will feel that its force is greatly weakened by the way in which it is presented. Every intelligent person knows that no town was ever abandoned for so trivial a reason — that within twenty-four hours such a difficulty would have been located and relieved. This feeling that the author is vouching for a fiction, a sham, is naturally carried over from the illustration to the religious truth. Or, if this is not the case, there may be a subtler effect — a feeling that a writer who will use so unsuitable an illustration

has hardly mastered the truth himself, and so is not qualified as a teacher.

Beside this put Jesus' illustration of the same truth: "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches." The effectiveness of the latter illustration is not simply because it deals with facts; the stories of Dives and Lazarus and of the Prodigal Son are as effective whether they are bits of actual biography or not. The weakness of the first illustration is not because it is untrue, but because what is manifestly untrue is vouched for as fact. Much of this unfortunate effect would have been avoided had the writer used the incident as an idealistic story, that is, if he had introduced it by saying, "They tell in the West a story which is exceedingly improbable, but which clearly illustrates my thought."

So important is it that the realistic story should carry the air of reality that the teacher may sometimes be led to present as if it were imaginary a story which he knows to be true, or at least to ignore the question of historical accuracy if it is doubted by the class. Surely it is folly to sacrifice the opportunity to enforce an important truth by insisting upon non-essential fact. A teacher may spend thirty-five minutes in attempting to demonstrate that the story of Jonah and the fish is of the realistic type, and still fail to convince his class. Another, ignoring that question, may center attention on the religious significance of the story, and so enforce a lesson that is of the greatest importance to his pupils in their daily lives. Jesus' teachings in the twelfth chapter of Matthew and the eleventh chapter of Luke are just as clear and just as impressive to those who believe that the story of Jonah is a parable.

It is in the realization of these differences in the nature

and pedagogical use of idealistic and realistic stories that the teacher finds help toward the solution of the problem of how to use the early Old Testament stories in the religious instruction of children, in view of the conclusions of modern Biblical scholarship. So largely have the conclusions of historical Bible study become a part of the teaching of the pulpit, the theological seminaries, and influential religious papers, and so deeply have they entered into the thought of the Christian home that many a teacher finds real difficulty at this point. The subject is introduced here not to make a plea for any method of Bible study or for any conclusions that have been reached by any school of students, but to aid the teacher to a solution of the pedagogical problem that arises out of the situation as it is. Those who have no difficulties will find no help in the suggestions offered.

The difficulty arises not simply because the miraculous appears in these stories, but grows out of the fact that in Babylonian, Chaldean, and other records appear versions of these same stories which long antedate the writing of the Old Testament. In these older versions there is a much lower moral tone, and polytheistic conceptions are universal, yet the correspondence is so close, both in content and form, that a common origin is implied. These facts, together with many discoveries as to the history of the peoples mentioned in the Biblical records, suggest an uncertainty as to just how we are to regard many of the Bible stories on their historical side. If they are presented as absolutely correct statements of fact, and later the child comes to doubt them, will he not be likely to lose faith in the Bible as a message from God? In fact, as we all know, this has often been the result. What shall the teacher do?

The best answer to the question would seem to be

found by a study of the aims and methods of those who first used these stories. From such investigation it at once appears that the Old Testament historical books were given their present form by prophets who had not a historical but a religious aim. Their primary purpose was not to teach facts concerning the development of the Hebrew nation — which facts of course they did not have at first hand — but to teach that God rules his world, and that he punishes sin and rewards righteousness. Reverent students tell us that these men used these stories for the same purpose that a modern preacher uses illustrations in his sermon, and that like the preacher of to-day they used both the accurate records of history and the traditions and stories that had been orally transmitted from a distant past. If these latter gave perverted ideas of God and goodness, they were purged of their immorality and made to conform to the prophet's ideal of God. The chief aim was not to record past events, but effectively to influence future conduct by revealing God's relations with men; their concern was not that they should be true in a narrowly literal sense — the prophet may not have known as to that — but that they should teach *The Truth.*

The teacher's part is not necessarily to accept the findings of these students, and surely not to teach them to the child, but may we not say that it is *to use the stories for this moral and religious aim?* If the child asks, "Is this story true?" he may, as Mrs. Houghton suggests, reply, "Never mind. What is the truth that it teaches?" And if the child responds to the inner meaning of the fairy-tale, the myth, and the legend, surely he will to the message of these stories that prepared the way for the fuller revelation that came in the Christ. Having found the meaning of the message he will not be disturbed by new conjectures as to its form. Whether one believes

in verbal inspiration or not, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

WHAT OTHERS SAY

What man has done, man can do. — *Old Proverb.*

Men will not suffer martyrdom for an abstraction. — *Marvin R. Vincent.*

The Old Testament made the Hebrews a peculiar people, by developing in them a unique God-consciousness. It will do the same for the people of the United States when it is freed from overloading convention and unintelligent interpretation. — *Louise Seymour Houghton.*

Their main purpose is to make an impression. This is the purpose of every story-teller, whether he be inspired or not inspired, and therefore, in all story-telling questions of fact fall into the background and questions of method take precedence. — *Ibid.*

And this is the tragedy of the book of Jonah, that a book which is made the means of one of the most sublime revelations of truth in the Old Testament should be known to most only for its connection with a whale. — *George Adam Smith* (?).

Nature can take liberties with facts that art dare not. — *E. F. Andrews.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

Consider the effect upon your mental attitude when a speaker describes an incident, of which you read long ago, as a recent personal experience; has this a bearing upon the question in hand? When the story of Jonah is mentioned, what are the associations which it brings up? Would they be the same if it had been commonly presented as an idealistic story? Select several of the parables of Jesus and try to decide whether or not they would be more impressive if you could know that they were accurate descriptions of what Jesus had seen. Is there any advantage in the use of a realistic rather than an idealistic story if it does not directly suggest conduct which you desire

to secure in the hearer? From this point of view compare the story of the Fall, of the capture of Jericho, and of Jonah and the fish with the stories of the boyhood of Jesus, of Jesus and the woman taken in sin, and the feast at the house of Simon.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

1. Realistic Stories.
   - *a.* The various kinds.
   - *b.* Their special value.
   - *c.* A danger to be guarded in their use.
2. The Old Testament Stories.
   - *a.* Difficulties in connection with their use.
   - *b.* Was the original use idealistic?
   - *c.* If used in the idealistic way, will they accomplish their purpose?

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

Anna Buckland, *Uses of Stories in the Kindergarten*, pp. 12–14.
Louise Seymour Houghton, *Telling Bible Stories*.
William Byron Forbush, *Manual of Stories*, pp. 111–121.
Richard T. Wyche, *Some Great Stories and How to Tell Them*, pp. 40–43.
E. N. and G. E. Partridge, *Story Telling for Home and School*, pp. 58–60.
Edna Lyman, *Story Telling*, pp. 162–173.
Walter Taylor Field, *Fingerposts to Children's Reading*, pp. 104–114, 158–161.

CHAPTER V

SOME VITAL CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD STORIES

CAREFUL study of good models is one of the best guides to success in the story-teller's art. A few hints may serve to aid the student to discover the sources of their strength. The more clearly these are defined the more easily will he make the method of their authors serve him in his work before his class.

Among the qualities that give value to stories that of *suggestiveness or meaning* is among the most important. It is surely legitimate to tell stories simply to entertain, but when we test them from the point of view of the teacher of morals this is invariably the prime requisite. If we depend upon the story method in our teaching we must be sure that the story has a message for the learner and one that cannot be missed. It is not enough that it be capable of such an explanation or interpretation that a truth may be implied; the moral must be embedded —or better still, embodied—in the story itself.

In the best stories the narrative and the lesson are so fully one that it is impossible to eliminate the last without destroying the story itself. It is because of this that some stories have had such power to influence many generations of men, and this explains how a single phrase serves to call up their whole significance. The words "sour grapes," "dog in the manger," "Damon and Pythias," and "the cross" would not be so laden with meaning if the teachings of the stories which they bring

up had been only incidental, instead of the very essence of the stories themselves.

Louise Seymour Houghton calls attention to the great superiority of moral influence in the stories of Genesis as compared with those of Judges, and explains it by showing that in the Pentateuch the old traditions have been so worked over that the moral lessons are a part of the stories themselves, while the author of Judges merely gave them a didactic setting.

Henry van Dyke's prayer that he may never tag a moral to a tale or tell a story without a meaning may well be adopted by the teacher. To add a moral application to a story is as complete a confession of failure as to append an explanation to a joke.

This statement is, of course, not true where the aim is to reveal truth to some and conceal it from others, as in some of the parables of Jesus, or where the story is purely illustrative, being designed simply to aid the intellect to grasp an idea.

If a good story is well told moralizing is not necessary; but that is not all. It has been clearly demonstrated that it weakens the moral influence. Psychologists have formulated the law that the power of normal suggestion varies *inversely* with the extent to which its purpose is definitely revealed. The mother who says to a child, "Why don't you go out on the lawn and see how many dandelions you can pick?" is likely to secure a period of privacy, but if she adds, "so that I can be alone for a little while," the result will not be the same. Children resent the old-fashioned Sunday-school stories with their too obvious moral purpose, but are strongly influenced by transcripts of life in which the same duties are clearly implied, but not explicitly stated. So adults are often more strongly influenced by a play like *The Servant in the House* than by many sermons.

Usually the story's lesson should be of positive type — that is, it should set forth what one wishes the hearer to do; still stories of warning have their place and many of the old favorites are of that kind. The familiar story of *The Little Half-Chick* is an excellent illustration of the type. It is entirely legitimate that the story should represent the violation of the precept that one would enforce, provided it chiefly emphasizes the fact that the wrong-doing meets a punishment which far overbalances the pleasure gained. The story still has its unmistakable moral meaning. Some painful stories are saved from immorality by the sad ending.

Admitting the supreme importance of the story's moral implications, one realizes that much otherwise attractive material must be rejected by the teacher. A considerable number of the old fairy-and folk-tales in which success follows dishonesty or unjustifiable selfishness at once come to mind. As in the case of the classic myths some of these can be so edited as to remove the objectionable features. In some cases the effort is unsuccessful, as it leaves the story so weakened that it is no longer of value. No teacher need waste time in such a fruitless attempt. A simple test will at once reveal whether such editing is possible or not. If the immoral element is essential to the climax of the story, the case is hopeless. If, on the other hand, it has to do with one of the less essential steps which lead up to or down from the vital turning-point of the tale, we may confidently hope to reconstruct that step without lessening the story's power. Thus we have here only the negative statement of the rule already affirmed, that the moral lesson should be the very essence of the story itself.

Next in importance to the quality of suggestiveness is that of *unity*. Every good story exemplifies it. It implies limitation to one set of related events, the exclusion

of unnecessary characters and incidents, emphasis upon one moral lesson, and usually, if the story is brief, the stirring of one kind of feeling. The story should be a logical unit and should be treated as such.

Here the hand of a master is especially revealed. Sometimes in the early chapters of an extended novel characters are introduced in a bewildering succession. They move in varying social strata, different lines of action appear in widely separated countries. The reader wonders how they can be brought into any relationship with each other, but as the plot unfolds the lines steadily converge, and when the end comes he finds that each person and each event has a natural and an essential place. With such a masterpiece compare a book like *David Harum*, which may be used for illustration because it was so widely read not long ago. It really consists of a few exceptionally good short stories which, in the attempt to convert them into a novel, are bound together by a thread of romance too weak to bear their weight. We all remember David Harum and the horse trade, and almost as many of us have forgotten the lay figure who passes for a hero, and his inconsequential love affair.

But it is in the short story that the importance of unity most clearly appears. The novice tends to wandering and diffuseness, and labors with useless details. He fears that to cut out incidents, though they are not really essential, would lessen the interest of the tale; but the study of the best models reveals the contrary result. In them there is, indeed, no lack of incident, but here all is significant. Even the choice of a synonym, the turn of a phrase, the rhythm of a sentence is part of an artistic whole. Such beautiful examples as the charming allegorical stories of Laura Richards, in using which one is almost constrained to memorize lest he change a word, were not achieved by chance. They must be the result

of patient and faithful effort after the choice of a definite aim and the selection of a consistent plan which has been so loyally followed that every smallest detail contributes to the one impression.

The parables of Jesus are splendid illustrations. Almost without exception they are marvels of unity and condensation. The story of the Prodigal Son is exceptional in that it carries a double lesson, but in our use of it we commonly ignore the lesser one. Who thinks of the elder brother when the story is mentioned?

An especially good example is found in the story of the rich man in Luke 12:16-20, which is not too long to quote in full. "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have not where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?"

It would be difficult to omit a single word; nor would it be easier to expand it without loss of effect. In its unity and conciseness its strength largely lies. The Bible stories generally, the fables of Æsop, and indeed most of the old classics, as well as the best modern examples, show the same characteristic. It is a safe rule which declares that what does not further the story's specific aim really lessens its power.

Some apparent exceptions will upon careful study be found to enforce the rule. Uninteresting characters are introduced that the hero's qualities may be more effectively set forth. Descriptions of natural scenery

not only give a local setting to the events, but may also be used to stir the feelings which forecast an approaching climax. Trivial happenings may reveal motives upon which the whole plot of the story turns.

That this second principle reenforces the first is clearly apparent. If a story really has a meaning, the more closely the principle of unity is followed the less will be the tendency to supplement ineffective story-telling by moralizing.

"Do not make the story taper toward a single point, the moral point," says Felix Adler, but without doubt it is the moralizing habit that he has in mind. Really the principle of unity implies just that, though it is not to be advertised or revealed in advance. It is the clumsy and mechanical way in which it is often done that we must avoid. Given certain characters and certain situations, the outcome is practically sure. In life the moral is always present; the story should simply present such facts as will permit it to appear.

A third important characteristic of the effective story is *action*. It has been said that the story is a transcript of life, and in real life it is the things that are done that count. It is true that thought and feeling are the virgin ore, but they do not pass current until they have been coined into deeds. Words at best stand in the relation of a paper currency, and too often one that is unduly inflated. We distrust the sincerity of the man who talks much about his feelings. Tell us what he does and we can draw our own conclusions. So the story is most effective which presents life in the concrete and permits the hearer to make his own interpretation.

Miss Vostrovsky's suggestive study shows that in young children the interest in what was done leads all others, and that they put several times as much emphasis upon action as upon moral qualities, sentiment, feeling, es-

thetic details and dress combined, while the thoughts of the actors received no mention at all. It is well known that adolescent boys demand "something doing" in their books, and in adults interest in action has hardly decreased.

Again the best models reveal appreciation of these facts. A single example must suffice. Dr. Hervey has called attention to this in connection with one of the parables of Jesus. The one quoted above is a still better example. Of its one hundred and seven words, thirty-three are verbs. Its movement compels our interest.

Miss Vostrovsky's study does not show that children do not respond to moral instruction, but that if the lessons are to be effective they must be put in terms of life. It is not otherwise with men. Ages ago the law said, This do, and thou shalt live, and men broke the law and paid its penalty. Then came Jesus, living a life, and saying, Follow me; and what the law could not do because it was weak, the story of the gospel has accomplished.

It takes life to influence life, and life is action.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Avoid moralizing, for if a story is good enough to tell it will do its own teaching. — *Carnegie Library, Pittsburg.*

A story should move with directness and force, like an arrow to its mark. — *Gardiner, Kittredge, and Arnold.*

The normal boy would rather read of a good boy than of a bad one, if the good one will only *do* something. He will have action, good or bad. — *Warren F. Gregory.*

Explanation and moralizing are mostly sheer clutter.

Every epithet or adjective beyond what is needed to give the image is a five-barred gate in the path of the eager mind traveling to a climax. — *Sara Cone Bryant.*

The true artist never thrusts his purpose upon you in awkward fashion, but it pervades his whole work as the soul does the body. — *E. F. Andrews.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

Make a careful study along the lines indicated above of at least half a dozen good short stories. Choose them from different sources, such as the Bible, Homer, Æsop, Grimm's or Lang's Fairy-Tales, Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare, Laura Richards, and some of the best recent novelists and magazine writers. Note where their moral influence lies. Compare them with one of the old-fashioned Sunday-school stories. Study especially the way in which the principle of unity is applied. Find the most interesting passages and observe to what extent action appears at those points. Seek for other sources of interest and strength than those mentioned above. Choose familiar stories for the most part that you may discuss them with your friends or at the normal class or story club.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

1. Suggestiveness.
   - *a*. Its vital relation to the story's climax.
   - *b*. The danger of pointing the moral.
   - *c*. The positive and the negative forms.
2. Unity.
   - *a*. Its meaning.
   - *b*. How attained.
   - *c*. The parables as illustrations.
3. Action.
   - *a*. The source of its influence.
   - *b*. Its place in good models.
   - *c*. It is life that is influential.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

Gardiner, Kittredge, and Arnold, *Manual of Composition and Rhetoric*, pp. 32–34.

Walter L. Hervey, *Picture Work*, pp. 31–63.

Clara Vostrovsky, *A Study of Children's Own Stories*, *Studies in Education*, Vol. I, pp. 15–17.

Evelyn May Albright, *The Short Story*, pp. 84–90.

Julia Darrow Cowles, *The Art of Story-Telling*, pp. 22–31.

CHAPTER VI

SOME TRICKS OF THE STORY-TELLER'S TRADE

CERTAIN devices are so commonly used by good story-tellers, and are so effective in adding interest to the story itself, that we overlook them in our enjoyment of the tales. We respond to their influence, but do not analyze sufficiently to realize just what gives the peculiar charm or force to the story that we enjoy. That it is more than the story itself we realize as soon as we listen to a favorite tale rehearsed without the omission of any essential element by one who lacks instinctive taste or the skill that training gives.

For the most part these devices are simply successful methods of applying principles that have been suggested in connection with the discussion of the story itself. They are so simple that any one who can tell a story at all can so use them as to add largely to the value of his work, while at the same time they afford opportunity for the display of the finest taste and the most perfect art.

One of the most important of these literary devices is *the use of direct rather than indirect discourse.* Through its use a certain vivacity of style is gained, and it adds movement and lifelikeness to the tale. There is no easier way to give the semblance of reality to an imaginary tale than by letting the characters speak for themselves. The personality of the narrator is less intrusive, and the effect upon the hearer is that of looking on at a scene in

real life. On the other hand, in the most literally prosaic tale characters who are not permitted to do their own talking seem but half alive.

Here as at many other points the parables of Jesus are splendid models. Note the story of the unrighteous steward in Luke 16. "There was a certain rich man, who had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he was wasting his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, What is this that I hear of thee? render the account of thy stewardship; for thou canst be no longer steward. And the steward said within himself, What shall I do, seeing that my lord taketh away the stewardship from me? I have not strength to dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. And calling to him each one of his lord's debtors, he said to the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, A hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bond, and sit down quickly and write fifty," etc. Translate this into indirect discourse and how much of interest and force is lost! It will be a description of life, indeed, but here it is life itself.

An illustration of unconscious appreciation of the value of this method of emphasizing life and action in a story is found in the "Says I" and "Says he" of the illiterate person who defeats his end only because he needlessly obtrudes upon the hearer the device which he uses.

The beginner in formal story-telling is almost sure, probably because of embarrassment and undue consciousness of his own personality, to fall into the way of describing at long range the most interesting movement of his tale, instead of by this plan literally reproducing the parts of it which most fully reveal the personality of the leading characters. A glance at almost any example from our

best writers of short stories will reveal illustrations of the method. The secret of its value is easily discovered. In indirect discourse you are necessarily conscious of the personality of the narrator; in direct discourse it is the personality of the actor that is stressed.

Another very helpful device is the *rhythmic repetition of certain significant words or phrases* from time to time through the progress of the tale. In the fairy- and folk-tales this frequently appears, as in case of the "hoppity-kick, hoppity-kick" of the little half chick, the "trip-trop, trip-trop" of the three goats crossing the bridge, and the various remarks of the big bear, the middle-sized bear, and the little wee bear. In such cases the story gains an added quaintness of form which has value in itself. The little child, puzzled by much that is unfamiliar, remembers the rhythmic phrase and welcomes it as we greet an old friend in a strange city. It has a further value, too, for the repetition of a descriptive phrase serves to identify a person or to point out identity of action or of feeling. Indeed it has, as Dr. Hervey has said, precisely the meaning of the *leit motif* in music. The child follows the story more readily and masters its meaning more surely.

The artistic story-teller will use this device with great effectiveness and power. He will carefully choose the repeated phrase that it may suggest the dénouement and point the lesson of the tale. So in the story of Blunderhead, the thunder that first rumbles, then rolls, and finally crashes overhead prepares for the approaching climax. In several of the Psalms, notably in 46, 103, 118, and 147, unity is emphasized and the meaning is clarified by such a device. The poets use it frequently. Kipling's "A rag and a bone and a hank of hair" more than hints at the conclusion from the first, and indelibly impresses the lesson, while the *Recessional* affords a

pleasanter example of a device which in slightly different form may add much to the impressiveness of a tale.

Some of the old stories in which action predominates and conversation is brief but very significant give the *speeches in verse.* This appeals to the child's interest as well as to the folk-mind, and in somewhat the same way as in case of the rhythmic repetition mentioned above. This device has been adopted by some of the best German writers of children's stories, and is very largely used by some of the most successful kindergarten story-tellers. It is not as difficult to introduce this feature into the stories that we tell young children as it might at first seem, for they do not demand rigid formality in either rhyme or meter.

In oral stories for children, and usually in the case of adults as well, the simplest grammatical constructions are preferable. In complex sentences words must be carried in memory and thought held in suspense until the end is reached. The use of short sentences and the avoidance of inverted forms except for special emphasis enables the listener to devote his whole attention to the story itself — and this means that it gains added power. For the same reason the terse Anglo-Saxon words are to be preferred. Colloquialisms are as appropriate in most stories as technical terms are in a scientific treatise. In short, whatever tends to shift attention from the form to the story itself, and to make that a faithful transcript of life is to be commended.

Not only is action rather than thought to be emphasized, but whatever gives concreteness to the presentation is of value. An argument can be framed from abstractions, but the very conception of the story brings it into the field of realities of another sort. Even the choice of words and the use of figures that are based on material

existences tend to increase the feeling of reality that the story should always convey.

Another characteristic of a good style is worthy of special mention. This is *brevity*. Toward it most of the suggestions already given point. The principle of unity suggests it, the emphasis upon action and concrete statements favors it, and the choice of simple and straightforward language tends toward the same result. In exposition something of repetition and reiteration of fact are often appropriate, but not so in the story, lest movement and force be sacrificed.

Here again all the Bible stories are models to be followed. As retold by the teacher or preacher who has neglected the art of narration, thought and feeling, as well as action, are often buried beneath an excess of verbiage. Andrew D. White says, "Dr. Eastburn was much given to amplification, and Gilman always insisted that he had heard him once, when preaching on the parable of Dives and Lazarus, discuss the prayer of Dives in torment for a drop of water, as follows: 'To this, my brethren, under the circumstances entirely natural, but at the same time no less completely inadmissible request, the aged patriarch replied,'" etc. It is unnecessary to comment on the result of such expansion of the story.

Usually the first draft of the beginner's story needs condensation, though this is not always inconsistent with a certain amount of subsequent amplification of the really vital points. Careful comparison of unskilled work with the best models will show that the latter are as remarkable for what they omit as for that which they relate. A multitude of petty details is both annoying and unnecessary. It is safe to assume some power of imagination on the part of the listener.

Another quality which is less commonly desirable is that

of freshness of form. That children do not object to repetition of their old favorites no patient mother or good-natured uncle needs to be informed. Even the publishers realize that novelty is not essential here, as *Dear Old Stories Told Once More* and *Twice-told Tales* testify. The little child often resents the change of a word or phrase. But if a story which is in advance of a child's interest is forced upon him, if it is repeatedly told in an uninteresting way, and if too obvious moralizing has been associated with it, the child tires of hearing it, and its value, if so presented it ever had a value, is lost. If now it is allowed to be forgotten for a time, and then is presented in such a form that it is not recognized until interest has been aroused, it will again gain teaching power. Unfortunately many of the Bible stories have suffered in just this way. Hence the value of sometimes departing entirely from the classic perfection of the King James Version to what may be a less finished literary form. But if this be done it is but to overcome prejudice and let the story do its work.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Let what he did tell what he was. — *Walter L. Hervey.*

Bible stories are models in this respect. You are left to read as much between the lines as you choose, but the kernel of the message is soon revealed. You are in touch with real life from start to finish and essentials only are admitted. — *Samuel B. Haslett.*

A vigorous style is almost always concise. . . . Good writers never encumber their stories with useless matter. They may introduce a multitude of details, but every one serves a definite purpose. — *Gardiner, Kittredge, and Arnold.*

There are no stories in any language of the world, which so aptly and precisely perform this function as the Bible stories, and this for a very simple reason, — the language in which they

were originally written, the Hebrew, like the child's language, has no abstract words. All Hebrew words are concrete, just as the little child's words are. — *Louise Seymour Houghton.*

Good story-tellers deal very little in abstractions and are very liberal in the use of figures of speech. — *E. Lyell Earl.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

Try the effect of changing the direct into indirect discourse in one of the parables of Jesus, making no unnecessary changes in the language. Without telling what you have done read this version to a friend who is familiar with the original, and ask for criticism. Observe the value of this device in the stories told in the club or class.

Make a list of the familiar stories that repeat significant phrases, and tell them to children and adults, noting the interest at these points.

In one or two familiar stories give the conversation in verse, and observe the result in the children's interest. If this is too difficult, tell a story in which this device is used, but putting the conversation in prose. Later use the original version, and study the effect.

If possible visit several kindergartens at the story hour and observe both the story-teller and the listeners with these suggestions in mind.

Take some story which you have told without special success, and after effort to strengthen it along the lines of the suggestions above outlined, give it another test.

Turn to some of the best collections of stories and see to what extent these simple rules have been followed and with what results.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

1. Literary devices of value.
   - *a.* Direct discourse.
   - *b.* Rhythmic repetition.
   - *c.* Dialogue in verse.

2. Further suggestions as to form.
   a. Simplicity of language.
   b. Concreteness in content and form.
   c. Conciseness and brevity.
   d. Freshness of form.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

Kavana and Beatty, *Composition and Rhetoric*, pp. 75–102.
Walter L. Hervey, *Picture Work*, pp. 56–70.
Carolyn Sherwin Bailey, *For the Story Teller*, pp. 122–128.
Evelyn May Albright, *The Short Story*, pp. 128–148.
J. Berg Eisenwein, *Writing the Short Story*, pp. 218–296.
Charles Raymond Barrett, *Short Story Writing*, pp. 119–131.
Leslie W. Quirk, *How to Write a Short Story*, pp. 21–30.
Barrett Wendell, *English Composition*, pp. 193–397.

CHAPTER VII

LEARNING TO TELL A STORY

BECAUSE practise is by far the most important element in the preparation of the skilled story-teller it seems best to give at this point some specific and detailed suggestions to guide the beginner in that phase of his training. These hints are based on principles that have already been presented. The practical aim above indicated is of sufficient importance to the novice to warrant something of detailed application, even though it may seem unduly repetitious and prescriptive.

The plan suggested may well guide the teacher's procedure until he has evolved a better one of his own. That he is likely to do, for none of us have the same mental habits; but the beginner, unless he is a genius of unusual type, cannot safely omit any one of the steps indicated below. Patient and systematic use of some such plan will greatly hasten the day when he can dispense with all guidance save his own feeling for that which is appropriate and artistic.

The first step in the preparation for the telling of a story is to determine the purpose for which it is to be used. It is not enough to assume the moral or religious aim; this must be defined in a specific way. The teacher must have clearly in mind the particular virtue to which the story is to incite the hearer or the very fault of which it is designed to warn him.

This means more than that an illustrative story must

really illustrate the lesson in which it is to be used. We sometimes repeat a story which we have heard because as we listened to it we felt its moral power, but we must remember that its special impressiveness was chiefly due to the narrator's appreciation of its message. If there be any vagueness in its meaning for us there will be a corresponding loss of force when we pass it on to another. If we use a story for a different purpose than that of the author it is obvious that we must begin our planning from our own point of view. If we use it for the same purpose, we may be sure that we will miss many a fine point of effectiveness in lesser details unless we fully appreciate the author's aim.

When the story has been selected and its message defined the next step toward preparation for telling it before the class is that of becoming thoroughly familiar with it. This does not imply memorization, for that involves a loss of the spontaneity that is one of the chief charms of story-telling, nor does it involve close attention to details, but rather a thorough grasp of the story as a whole. Having reached a clean-cut definition of the moral of the tale, there must be a clear appreciation of the feelings which are to be stirred, and then a mastery of the general outlines of the events. If the story has strongly impressed one, two or three thoughtful readings will usually secure these results.

The third step is one of careful analysis. The story-teller must determine what forms the climax of the story. At first this will often require careful thought, but with practise it will become an almost unconscious process. Having settled this the teacher must next decide what events are necessary to prepare the way for the climax, and the order in which they can be most effectively presented. The making of a written outline will at first be the most satisfactory mode of accomplishing this, and,

indeed, is usually essential unless the plot is very simple. These vital events having been determined and set in order one must now decide how the story can be ended without detracting from the force of the climax, and how it can be begun in such a way as to arouse immediate interest.

The essential elements being now defined, the fourth step is to tell or write the story with such elaboration of the bare outline as may seem desirable. For the teacher who uses the story orally, writing is doubtless the less valuable exercise at this stage. The best plan is to tell the story to a friend of the patient sort, or, if it is suitable, to a child or group of children — who are always ready to become the subjects of experiments of that nature. The chief purpose of this preliminary telling of the story is to test one's mastery of the content, and to prepare the way for a refinement and enrichment of both content and form.

The fifth step consists of a strict criticism of the story, in the form which it has now taken, from the standpoint of the principle of unity. Every episode, incident, event, and description that does not directly add to the power of the story in the use that you now have in mind is to be eliminated. This is sometimes heroic treatment, but it pays. The apparent loss is retrieved with added gain in the next step. Your aim is to stir certain feelings or to present certain truths; every word that does not further these ends hinders the accomplishment of your purpose.

The sixth step consists in the careful elaboration of the really essential features of the story by touches of description, adding of details, use of telling epithets, and in all other ways that will add to effectiveness without obscuring the main points. This will frequently leave the story as full of detail as before the preceding con-

densation, but of detail that *at every point* strengthens the story for the use to which it is to be put.

The last step is that of practise. Tell the story again and again. It is not possible to carry this too far. The aim is largely to provide for perfect familiarity with the content and form, but there are other advantages of great importance. As one gains familiarity with the story there is less of self-consciousness. One learns to give oneself wholly to the story and the audience. Again, there is a reaction to the hearers, and the form improves as a result. There is also a gain growing out of the response of the story-teller to the story itself. More and more, as a result of this repetition, it becomes a personal possession and is told not from memory but really from the heart. This is the principle that lies back of the old saying that a man may tell a lie until he believes it himself! Let us make use of this psychological fact, for it will aid us to gain success. It is after the story has been told twenty times, and it may be to the same audience if they are children, that there will be most frequent requests that it be told again.

Looking back over these suggestions the beginner may feel that it would require less effort to simply follow the story as it appears in the book or as it was told by another. There can be no doubt that this is true, but the fact remains that good story-tellers do not do that way. Those who do lack confidence and spontaneity, fail to develop original ways of putting things, and are unable to improvise or even to satisfactorily work up their own experiences for use with a class. All these ends are furthered by systematic use of such a plan as has been outlined.

At first the diction of the novice will not equal that of the master in whose mind the story first took form, but there is always the opportunity to turn again to the

original version, after one has thus made the story his own, and adopt a telling phrase or correct a clumsy statement. And on the whole it will from the first give better results. It will lead to mastery of content before form. The action will be seen as moving to one clearly defined end by steps which can hardly be missed. The various incidents will appear in due perspective. The mere setting of the story will become as important in its contribution to artistic effect as the well-studied background of a painting, and it will obtrude itself no more.

The average person can relate a series of events in the order in which they occurred without much effort, and that will serve his purpose if it is but to give information. Any one can memorize a story by simple repetition, and that plan may be used if he is to tell but one. But if motives are to be stirred, if conduct is to be guided, if character is to be formed, and especially if one is to have this opportunity many times, he can afford to honor his art and take such time and pains as are necessary to perfect his technique. Skill is nothing more than the possession of correct habits of procedure. If one way of doing a thing is better in the end, it pays to do it that difficult way at first because by and by that way will become the easy and unconscious mode of procedure, as well as the one that leads to the highest achievement.

Practise, *guided by a well-conceived plan*, is the chief secret of success.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Practise. It may be hard on your relatives and friends, but the world will be the gainer. — *Agnes Y. Downey.*

If you blunder on a detail of a story, never admit it. Never

take the children behind the scenes, and let them hear the creaking of your mental machinery. — *Sara Cone Bryant.*

Practise! It will go clumsily at first. . . . Imagination will be dull, facts will escape your memory, relations will be confused, you will seem to be acting a part. . . . But persevere, persevere! Study results. If you fail, see why you fail, and thus lay the foundation for success. Listen to others that know how to do it. Catch their points of effectiveness. Above all things, practise! practise! practise! — *Amos R. Wells.*

But if one have neither natural adaptation nor experience, still I say, Tell the stories; tell the stories; a thousand times, tell the stories! You have no cold, unsympathetic audience to deal with; the child is helpful, receptive, warm, eager, friendly. His whole-hearted interest, his surprise, admiration, and wise comment will spur you on. — *Nora Archibald Smith.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

Select two stories that are about equally difficult, and both of which contain a number of incidents or events. Learn one by simply reading it again and again without memorizing. Follow the plan suggested above with the other. At the end of a week test the results by an attempt to use each.

Analyze the stories that you read. Study the way in which the several elements are managed.

Recall some story which you have heard but once, but which roused your interest, and attempt to outline the successive events in their order. Then make the analysis and see if others are recalled. Note how readily you can fill gaps by improvisation when the aim is defined and the elements are outlined before you.

Follow the plan outlined in this article in the reproduction from memory of some good, short story, and note the value of the fifth and sixth steps.

As you listen to stories in the meeting of the League, club, or class, jot down outlines as indicated above, and work up the stories for use.

Satisfy yourself that such a plan of preparation does not pay before you abandon it.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

1. Mastering the story.
   - *a.* Defining its aim.
   - *b.* Seeing it as a whole.
   - *c.* Analyzing it into its elements.
2. Giving it form.
   - *a.* The first reproduction.
   - *b.* Condensation for unity of meaning.
   - *c.* Expansion for emotional effect.
3. Developing skill.
   - *a.* Practise for familiarity with the story itself.
   - *b.* Practise for improvement through reaction to the audience.
   - *c.* Practise for impressiveness through making it your own.
4. The value of following such a plan.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

Richard G. Moulton, *Second Report of the Religious Education Association*, p. 30.

Walter L. Hervey, *Picture Work*, pp. 31–43 and 56–63.

Gardiner, Kittredge, and Arnold, *Manual of Composition and Rhetoric*, pp. 39–88.

Sara Cone Bryant, *How to Tell Stories to Children*, pp. 81–99.

William Byron Forbush, *Manual of Stories*, pp. 36–38, 43–44, 152–172.

Richard T. Wyche, *Some Great Stories*, pp. 76–82, 90–101.

Carolyn Sherwin Bailey, *For the Story Teller*, pp. 231–244.

E. N. and G. E. Partridge, *Story Telling for Home and School*, pp. 32–38.

Edna Lyman, *Story Telling*, pp. 48–78.

Angela M. Keyes, *Stories and Story Telling*, pp. 18–33.

CHAPTER VIII

THE STORY-INTERESTS OF CHILDHOOD

EVERY good teacher, though he be untrained in the schools, shrinks from boring his pupils, for he instinctively recognizes interest as the most characteristic element in the mental attitude of the learner. The old disciplinary conception of education, whose spirit Mr. Dooley sets forth in the statement that "It don't make any difference what ye teach children, provided they don't like it," has lost favor among modern educators. This is not from any sentimental softness, but because of the scientific discovery that interest is nature's provision that children may learn the things that they most need to know.

It has been found that certain interests are common to practically all children, and that particular ones are characteristic of particular stages of development. These spontaneous interests are not to be lightly regarded, for they are instinctive expressions of the needs of the child's nature. They differ at different periods of life because the needs of the infant, the boy or girl, and the youth or maiden are not the same.

This conception of the meaning of interest, which has been well established by investigations in child-study and kindred branches of psychology, has not only won the favor of many who in the past ignored it, but has changed the attitude of some who formerly valued it as an aid in the teaching process. No longer

is the aim simply to make the lesson interesting, perhaps by linking with it in a purely artificial way something to which the child's attention naturally goes out: now the teacher seeks to understand the natural interests of the child, and to shape the lesson from the material and the relations that are thus indicated as the ones that nature would use to prepare the unfolding life for the experiences that are before it.

It is from this point of view that we must approach the study of the story-interests of the child. Manifestly the attitude of the listener toward the story that is told is of the greatest importance to the teacher. The child's spontaneous interests not only facilitate the assimilation of the lesson, but also give definite clues to the selection of the truth to be taught and the form which the lesson should take. With this psychological principle in mind we may note the kinds of stories that are particularly interesting at various ages.

The teacher who selects stories of child life for children of the kindergarten and primary grades is not in error, for both common observation and scientific study testify that young children are especially interested in the doings of others of about their own age. Dr. Dawson's study confirms this general conclusion in special relation to the stories of the Bible. While the Old Testament stories are in the main most interesting to children under nine years of age, there appears a special interest in the stories of the birth of Jesus. The stories of the infancy of Moses and of the childhood of Samuel are also among the chief favorites of the younger children. One has but to glance at the successful collections of stories for children of this age to see how fully the editors of juvenile literature have reacted to this attitude of the child.

In the Bible stories mentioned above there are ele-

ments that are quite foreign to the common experiences of the child, but nevertheless it is wholly probable that the child's chief interest in stories of this type centers not so much in the unusual as in the familiar elements. It is the life of a child, the very life that he knows best, that the child wishes to see portrayed. By nature's plan he is now following very closely in the footsteps of the ancestors who have gone before him. It is in early adolescence, when he most nearly breaks with the past of the race as well as with his parents' control, that he needs the exceptional and sensational to spur him on to do the deeds that have never yet been done.

The very well known interest of young children in myths, fairy-tales, and folk-tales brings no contradictory evidence here, for it is not the supernatural or marvelous element in these stories that appeals to the mind of the child. Rather he hardly realizes its presence. He does not yet live in a world of law, and these things are like the every-day happenings of his own life. The real interest is rather that which has been mentioned above, for all the fairies, witches, gnomes, and giants that appear in these kinds of literature are really but children masquerading in other forms. The morals of these stories are of a naïve and childish sort; all the clever strategy is such as a child would devise, and such as would deceive no one but himself. The real value of the unnatural or supernatural element, as has been indicated in a previous chapter, is that it provides the machinery for a poetic justice which will be clearly appreciated by the child.

It will help to solve some of the lesser problems of the Sunday-school teacher of young children if she will remember that "wonder stories" are not *wonder* stories for them. The presence of the miraculous element in the Bible stories need hardly be considered by

the kindergartner. To the child in her class nothing is a miracle, or everything is a miracle as you choose to put it. That Jesus could walk upon the water is not stranger than that the fishes can swim beneath its surface; that He could multiply the loaves and fishes is as natural as that the grocer should be able to supply our wants from day to day.

Another marked interest of young children is in the natural objects about them, and especially in living creatures. Kittens, dogs, squirrels, birds, insects make a fascinating appeal to their attention, and plants, stars, clouds, and winds really stir the same kind of interest, for the child endows them all with life and feelings like his own. It is because of this animistic tendency of the child that stories of the persevering rain-drop and benevolent sunbeam kind do not repel him as they do his older brother or sister who has reached the junior department of the Sunday-school. Doubtless the personification of natural objects is often overdone, and sometimes the habit is a lazy one and leads to the missing of facts that are more interesting and more significant than the teacher's fiction, but commonly no great harm is done if the practise is not carried beyond the kindergarten period.

The chief value of the use of such stories is perhaps in the variety that they afford. The fresh forms attract, but the deeper interest is in life like his own. A prominent writer on the kindergarten has called attention to the fact that young children sympathize more deeply with the woes and joys of the lower animals than they do with those of men and women. This is doubtless because the former are much nearer the level of his own feeling life than are those of adult human beings.

Among all the types of stories that please young children it is found that those which are most concrete,

which deal most with action and with things, make the strongest appeal. Subtle analysis of character has no place with children. The witches and giants must be wholly bad, and the heroes and heroines must be conventionally good. Under such circumstances the savage justice that so frequently appears does not offend. The plot should be very simple, and the story should move swiftly and directly to its necessary end. Surprises are always appreciated, provided they do not obscure the straightforward simplicity that has just been urged, but mystification is not to be tolerated here. To summarize in general terms, childlikeness, concreteness, simplicity, and directness are the qualities that appeal.

When we turn to the children who have passed from the stage of early childhood to that of prepubescence, those who are between eight or nine and about twelve years of age, we find that the interests have changed to a very considerable extent. One of the characteristic changes in the child's mental life is the rapidly developing sense of law and the rather prosaic and matter-of-fact spirit that accompanies it. It finds manifestation in the changed attitude toward fairy-tales and other imaginative literature which seems untrue to fact. Reality and the simplest beginnings of causality have a meaning and stir his interest as they did not before.

Nature provides that the young child, living so largely on the plane of instinct, shall seek that which will give culture to his emotional life, and, outside of the needs of his material life, he pays small attention to questions of reality or fact, for to him they have not large importance. Now she deals, in the older child, with more highly developed feelings which have grown up in the race in connection with the perception of cause and effect and the reign of uniform law, and at her bidding the child turns from the world of fancy to that of fact. Tell him

a story and he will ask, "Is it true?" And whether you use the story to illustrate a principle or to stir his emotional life it will have a larger influence if you can tell him that it is.

Besides this new interest in the real and true there is an increasing development of interest in the activities and achievements of adult life. This is an expression of the fact that nature no longer permits him to be satisfied with life that is lived only in to-day, but wakes the thought of a future that does not seem too far away to be of present importance. This suggests the use of stories from biography and history and from the experiences of the teacher and his acquaintances. To all of these the child gives ready response if they are well selected and well told.

Two other traits that characterize this period of the child's life are significant here. The first of these is the selfishly utilitarian spirit with which the child views the world about him. "What is the good to me?" is the almost universal test. The second is the desire to know and the readiness with which he stores away facts for future use. While interests mentioned above suggest the form, these hint at the desirable content of the tales that are now to be told. For the most part an egoistic morality, one that demonstrates that it pays to do right, and that it does not pay to do wrong, should be exemplified in these stories. And much of information can be tactfully conveyed without overloading with details or weakening the story's moral power. Indeed the most of Biblical antiquities that it is wise to present can be taught through the use of Bible stories, and chiefly in the junior department of the Sunday-school.

In spite of the development of the sense of law two forms of idealistic stories are of value here. Legends have a considerable element of fact and form the natural

link that joins fairy-tale and myth with the historic stories. Fables, perhaps, are never more effective than through these years. They are always recognized as fiction, but they set forth in a picturesque way those simple and selfish moral principles that the child is with delight discovering for himself.

Dr. Dawson's study shows that the dominant interests through these years of the child's life are in the Old Testament stories, and these meet most of the specifications mentioned above. The miraculous element, if presented as miracle, that is, as departure from natural law through divine power, rarely raises any difficulties. Such doubt comes later, after the adolescent has gained a larger grasp of nature's laws and of God's ways of working through them.

In case of the young child the story acts through suggestion by making the conduct which is desired appear attractive; in the older boy and girl its chief value is in setting forth a moral law: in case of each the natural interests point the way to success.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Wouldst thou know how to teach the child? Observe him, and he will show you what to do. — *Friedrich Froebel.*

The spontaneous interests of children become the dominant factors in education, whether they are recognized or not. — *George E. Dawson.*

Interest is the signboard pointing the direction in which education must proceed. — *M. V. O'Shea.*

Anyone can put in everything. It is only the born story-teller, or the one who will sit down by the side of a child and patiently observe the points that the child sees and likes to hear, that can be trusted to put in and leave out just the right points. — *Walter L. Hervey.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

Make a study of the best collections of stories for children of the ages indicated with the suggestions above outlined in mind.

Ask the children of your own class what stories they like best, note the ages of each, and seek to arrive at some conclusion from the facts thus secured. A cooperative study by all the members of a story club or training class will have much larger value. Especially, ask as many children as possible as to the Bible stories that they like best, recording the age of each, and tabulate the results as Dr. Dawson has done.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

1. The significance of natural interest.
2. The story-interests of early childhood.
   - *a.* Child life.
   - *b.* Fairy-tale and myth.
   - *c.* Nature stories.
3. The story interests of older children.
   - *a.* The true.
   - *b.* Adult life.
   - *c.* Self-interest.
   - *d.* Legend and fable.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

George E. Dawson, *The Child and His Religion*, pp. 1–98.

Clara Vostrovsky, *A Study of Children's Reading Tastes, Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. VI, pp. 523–535.

Clark Wissler, *Interests of Children in Reading Work, Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. V, pp. 523–540.

Carolyn Sherwin Bailey, *For the Story Teller*, pp. 1–40.

E. N. and G. E. Partridge, *Story Telling for Home and School*, pp. 70–74.

William Byron Forbush, *Manual of Stories*, pp. 21–27.

CHAPTER IX

THE STORY-INTERESTS OF EARLY ADOLESCENCE

In adolescence, as in childhood, spontaneous interests give a clue to vital needs. A knowledge of the unfolding life serves to emphasize the significance of the natural tastes and gives many hints as to the philosophy of nature's plans for the informal education of the youth.

Adolescence is the period of life lasting approximately from twelve to twenty-four years of age. It may be subdivided into three stages which are quite clearly differentiated, and each of which has its peculiar tastes and interests. The first of these stages covers about the first four years of the period; the second extends about three years further; and the last completes the period preceding maturity.

In the mental life the most marked characteristic of the whole period is the rapid growth of the consciousness of selfhood in the individual, and of the relations of that newly discovered self to others. The impulse to realize one's own personality is at first instinctive, and its meaning is not understood by the youth, but gradually it comes into clear consciousness and becomes a definite aim. In the first stage the emotional attitude may be said to be egoistic, in the second, ego-social, and in the last it should be fully socialized. These conditions largely determine the interests of the period. The suggestions below seek to point out some special opportunities

of the teachers of pupils of the earlier of these ages. The interests that are mentioned do not belong to these periods of development alone, nor should it be understood that other types of stories are not to be used.

During the first stage of adolescence, and particularly at its beginning, the hero-story is perhaps more attractive than any other. This interest is stronger in boys, but usually appears in girls as well. The chief special requisite for successful stories of this type is that they should center in a strong, forceful character whose achievements form the material of the tale. The character that appeals is the one that achieves obvious success. Later the victories of defeat will win due appreciation; now it is the man who brings things to pass who stirs the enthusiasm of youth. His interest is just shifting from the world of things to that of personality, and as he still retains much of the old standards of judgment, what a man does bulks quite as large as what he is.

Nature's purpose here is very obvious. Unconsciously to himself the youth is selecting the models that are to shape his own life. The love of the sensational and distaste for the commonplace are not inconsistent with the plan. It is in adolescence that such new steps in development as the race is yet to take will be accomplished, and nature now seeks to stir in every one the impulse to rise above the common level and do surpassing things. Hence the impossible hero does not repel and may have a real pedagogical value. Nature makes provision a little later for the correction of such misconceptions as may arise, after the moral stimulus has been received.

Certain forms of this interest seem to defeat the educational end, for too often the boy turns to the "nickel novel" in preference to literature of a higher moral

grade. The pugilist, the border ruffian, the highwayman, or the bandit seems more attractive than the more dignified figures who appear on the pages of his Sunday-school book. Here nature seems to lead him astray, but a careful study of the boy's attitude, and of the books themselves, shows that this interest is not even due to the lawlessness of immaturity, but rather to the admiration for strong characters whose most prominent traits are physical prowess, fortitude, courage, loyalty, and honor — a crude form of real honor, though it be honor among thieves. These are the qualities that make the real hero, and most of them are essential traits. Really it is not his vices but his virtues that the lad admires in the immoral hero of the tale. It is our failure to set before him good men of heroic mold that turns him to this harmful literature. Have a hero he must. If he finds him here there is danger, though it is his virtues that really attract. The inexperienced youth, deprived of his heritage of stories of the noble lives of those who have gone before, identifies the immoral conduct with the courageous spirit that is back of it, and seeks to achieve his own manhood by emulating the deed. The teacher owes it to every youth to bring him many a tale of the noble, the brave, and the true.

This apparently degenerate interest often brings the teacher the very opportunity that he has long desired. A poorly-trained public-school teacher was conducting certain investigations in child-study under the direction of the educational authorities of the state. Each pupil was asked to indicate what person he most admired and why. The worst boy in the school wrote the name of a young man who had stopped a railroad train and single-handed robbed the passengers and made his escape uninjured. The teacher said indignantly, "If you were he you would go to prison." "*I don't care,*"

said the boy, "*I'd rather go to prison than to this school. He was the bravest one among them anyhow.*" What a pathetic revelation of his vague but bitter consciousness that his life was misinterpreted and wronged, and of his admiration for the virtues that really make a man! The teacher reported it as a case of hopeless lack of the moral sense. Had she introduced him to but a score of the line of heroes that stretches from the days of King Arthur to those of Jack Binns of the *Republic*, she might have seen his life transformed.

With the younger pupils of this age the stories of legendary heroes are perhaps most effective, though it would be error to use them exclusively. There should be a gradual transition in emphasis from such to historical characters and from these to the men of to-day. There is also a similar development of interest from the startling and spectacular to the less conspicuous heroism of every-day life.

In all these stories concreteness of presentation should be the aim, but the real emphasis should be on the character that inspires the deed rather than on the act itself or even the consequences that follow it. Particularly in the latter part of the first stage of adolescence, when biographical stories will be especially prominent, the focus of attention should be further shifted from the traits of character which inspire the deeds to the struggles and choices which shape character itself. This will be accomplished largely by telling of the really critical events of a life and giving clear indication of the alternative lines of conduct that are open. Thus the youth is helped to see how victories over self are usually the key to victories over men.

In addition to the classic stories of legend, history, and fiction, modern biography will afford much material for the story-teller's use. An especially rich field for

the teacher of religion is found in missionary biography. The one-volume life of John G. Paton is a good though imperfect example of what should be done in adapting such literature to the youth. Some day Church history will be rewritten, not from the standpoint of the development of doctrine, but of the conquest of the world for Christ and of Christian heroism in general. Then a storehouse of fresh and valuable material will be opened to the teacher. Meanwhile there are treasures for those who will search.

Through the first stage of adolescence nature's aim seems to be chiefly to develop virtues of the more egoistic type, such as have been indicated above, but at the close of this period the more unselfish feelings become prominent, and during the middle stage they should assume the dominant place. This change opens the way for the introduction of stories of moral heroism of another type. Through most of early adolescence the stories should incite to triumph over difficulties, self-mastery, and loyalty to friends; now they should more and more inspire the hearer for self-sacrifice and service and even love for enemies. It is in the later stages of adolescence, however, that this altruistic interest culminates, though it commonly wakens several years earlier in the girls than in the boys.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Children are much less influenced in their choice of ideals than is popularly supposed. Their choices seem to come from the real fibers of their nature. — *Will Grant Chambers.*

If we would but take advantage of the normal interests and introduce them to the lives of the men and women who have made history, the results obtained would be more in proportion to the time and energy spent. — *E. B. Bryan.*

When such a selection of heroes has been made, their characters, deeds, and sayings may become the media through which the children shall be taught Hebrew history and geography, moral and religious principles, and anything else that the Old Testament can supply for purposes of religious instruction. — *George E. Dawson.*

With the great, one's thoughts and manners easily become great — what this country longs for is personalities, grand persons, to counteract its materialities. — *Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

The books for our boys must be wholesome, manly, and vigorous; clean in the warp and woof; books which excite to noble deeds without preaching and which present character worthy of emulation. — *Daniel C. Heath.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

Make a careful study of the stories that are being read by the young people of this age with whom you are associated, noting particularly the hero-tales. Question them as to why they like the ones that they prefer.

Test some such book as "*The Story of John G. Paton*," or stories of Livingstone with the younger ones. Watch the newspapers and magazines for stories of modern heroism, noting the effect as you use them with your adolescent pupils or friends.

Compare the story-interests of boys and girls of about the same age. Above all ask the young people to tell you stories of their heroes, and be ready to accept the hints that they unconsciously drop.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

1. Adolescence and its general significance.
2. The special interest in the hero-story.
   - *a.* Its meaning.
   - *b.* Its perversion.
   - *c.* The planning of a hero-tale.
3. Sources for stories of this type.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

George E. Dawson, *The Child and His Religion*, pp. 1–98.
Will Grant Chambers, *The Evolution of Ideals*, *Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. X, pp. 101–143.
National Congress of Mothers, *Parents and Their Problems*, Vol. 6, pp. 45–57.
John Mason Tyler, *Growth and Education*, pp. 194–195.
G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence*, Vol. II, pp. 474–478.

CHAPTER X

THE STORY-INTERESTS OF LATER ADOLESCENCE

As has been already indicated early adolescence seems, in nature's plan, to be a time when the youth is to form such ideals and engage in such disciplinary training as will best develop his own personality, chiefly on the egoistic side. But this gives him only a part of his equipment to meet the requirements of life. The later stages of the period prepare for his adjustment to social life and for the service of the social group. The change from the more selfish to the more altruistic relationship with society proceeds gradually and is largely furthered by the development of new spontaneous interests. Every transition period in human development is one of especial importance to the educator, for it offers two possibilities of surpassing significance in relation to his aims: on the one hand it provides opportunity for exceedingly rapid progress toward the ends he seeks; on the other, if environment and training are unfavorable, there is the danger of a permanent or long-continued arrest of development at the stage from which nature now seeks to promote the child.

One of the special interests of middle adolescence, which while largely egoistic in spirit leads away from the self-centered life, is that in romantic love. This is especially prominent and perhaps almost the dominant feeling at fourteen to sixteen or seventeen years of age in girls and sixteen to eighteen or nineteen years in

boys. The appearance of love between the sexes before this period of life seems to be abnormal, and when it occurs is probably usually due to unwise stimulation by those who are older. Now the beginnings of this attitude naturally appear, and one of its first manifestations is the new interest in sentimental literature. The self-consciousness which is so rapidly developing at this time often produces a shyness which at first hinders any direct and intimate association with individuals of the other sex outside of the necessary round of daily life; so that often influential ideals have been accepted and the attitude toward these matters has been preformed by literature and observation when the actual association begins. This means danger for the unguided youth and opportunity for the intelligent teacher.

Love is so important a factor in human life that only the most thoughtless teacher or parent would think it a trivial matter to attempt to guide its first manifestations. The choices and the conduct which are determined by it influence the happiness and the welfare of the individual as largely as any that he makes. If education is to be at all complete much wise guidance must be given to this emotion as it begins to assert itself in the individual life.

A wealth of very valuable story material is available for teachers who can shape their stories from the rough, and not a few choice tales are ready for the novice's use. Such a splendid illustration as Annie Fellows Johnston's beautiful story of *The Three Weavers* may well serve as the classic example of the latter kind. One could wish that no girl might grow out of her girlhood without hearing it again and again. It would seem that none could fail to respond to the charm of its form and the appeal of its message. This is a story written with the very aim urged above, and one that splendidly

fulfils its purpose. But there are hundreds of others, usually of the realistic type, embedded in our general literature, which have great value for the same purpose.

Many who read these words acknowledge a lifelong debt of gratitude to Miss Muloch, George Macdonald, George Eliot, or others of the men or women who have written purely and truly of love. Those who have such a memory need no argument as to the power of the story here. Such as had no similar experience in youth cannot estimate the influence that the story-teller may here exert upon other lives.

But the appearance of love in the emotional life of youth has a far larger indirect influence upon character than most of the more thoughtful teachers and parents suppose. Anthropologists tell us that man rose from the savage and barbarian states largely through the influence of woman. It was she who tamed and civilized him. While he hunted and fought she developed the domestic arts and so introduced him to the industrial life. Again, when she ceased to be his servant and became his lady-love and mistress of his home she trained him in a hundred refinements and virtues that he would hardly have discovered for himself. What the age of chivalry did for the race nature seeks to accomplish in the individual during middle adolescence, and she uses much the same means. About this central impulse of love are grouped other and more directly ethical feelings, and together they guide the life. Stories that are true to life commonly reveal these in their interplay and so touch the wider life of the hearer. Hence it is that the best stories of love stir the moral nature to its depths and often have a tremendous influence upon the shaping of character.

With the clean-cut memory of a few stories that were full of truth and power and that had a bracing and up-

lifting influence upon the whole moral nature, most of us have a vague recollection of other stories that we read at this period of life, perhaps by dozens or scores. These were books that appealed to the sentimental attitude of youth, but which divorced love from real life, and which offered no example worthy of imitation and suggested no ideals that would inspire to better living. This is not usually classed as immoral literature because the fault seems to be only a negative one, but " unmoral " is too weak a term to describe its influence upon youth. This indeed is often overbalanced by a single book of the kind just mentioned, but such influence as they do have is exerted at a critical time when failure to make rapid advance to higher levels means arrest of moral development. Hence there is real danger here.

As in case of the " nickel novel " a little earlier in adolescence, we can never eliminate such stories from the experience of youth by simply declaiming against them. We must substitute the literature of pure and healthy sentiment for that of frothy sentimentality. To this better type of story the heart of youth does respond, and " out of the heart are the issues of life."

A less frequent but when it appears a much more serious danger-point is in what the purveyors of immoral literature and that which verges upon the immoral term " French novels," though many of them are not of French origin and resemble the literary masterpieces after which they are named only in that they present with the same frankness the gross and degenerate phases of the passion which should uplift and glorify the whole of human nature. Good stories of pure love go far to create the habit of moral cleanliness which will make this as disgusting as any other form of filth.

By guiding the choice of books many a teacher has helped his pupils here, and the opportunity is too great

to be lightly regarded by any one who is interested in the moral welfare of youth; but it is for story-*telling* that the plea is made at this time. The good story, if it is well told, gains as much in the telling for the adolescent as for the child. A single suitable test will convince the skeptic of this. But there are hindrances to the practise other than mere doubt as to its value. The chief difficulty is doubtless that most of the stories that appeal to the interest under discussion are too long for oral use.

Here it is that faithful practise in such analysis and reconstruction of stories as was urged in the earlier chapters of this book will especially serve the teacher. At least one in four of the really good novels will admit of such selection and condensation of material as will make them suitable for our special use. Often the most significant portion of a story appears in a single chapter. In such cases one who has accustomed himself to the making over of stories to suit his special needs will not find it a difficult matter to so outline the really necessary preceding and following portions of the story as to make it serve his purpose. When a larger portion of the story is of really vital significance the task is more difficult, but if the story is worth while the result will justify the effort.

Interest in the purely unselfish life of service for others finds considerable manifestation in middle adolescence, but it is after the seventeenth or eighteenth year that it reaches its larger development. So strong is the instinctive tendency toward altruism that often self-sacrifice becomes a pleasure, and is sought almost as an end in itself. Now the real spirit of missions makes its full appeal, as it could not in the earlier years. To the average youth of fourteen Father Damien throws his life away for those who are not worthy of the sacrifice. But for our older adolescent even David Livingstone

opening the Dark Continent to the world does not make as strong an appeal.

Now it is that the story of Jesus will go home to the heart with irresistible power, if it be but simply told. Let us learn to tell it as we would another tale, studying its elements, shaping it with care, telling it with the feeling that it stirs in our own hearts, and leaving it to do its work. Sometimes we do well to emphasize the human side of the life of Jesus. It is not always theology that the youth needs most. Surely there are many times when a philosophical analysis of the plan of salvation is not as valuable as the simple narration of how that plan was manifested to men.

But it is not to religion alone that we must turn for the story of self-sacrifice for others. The popular novels, the daily papers, and the incidents of life about us offer material that will meet the teacher's needs. One who will faithfully prepare one such story and present it to a group of older young people will hardly need urging to repeat the experiment.

Best of all stories for this period of life are those that while they appeal to these interests in romantic and unselfish love at the same time stimulate the higher ambitions and aspirations of youth and put the strongest emphasis upon the shaping of character through the denial of baser impulses and choice of the nobler way at the crises of life. Of all who write in English none seem to the writer to have better fulfilled these conditions than George Macdonald. Without untactful moralizing his novels exert a very great moral and religious influence. Whether they furnish much material for the teacher's use or not, they cannot fail to give appreciation of the story's power and inspiration for its use. One may turn almost at random to the books and read with profit to this end.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

From giving, first, edibles and toys up to self-effacement; from love of being together to complete coordination of habits, tastes, and instincts; from trying to please and cause a smile up to always preferring another's good to one's own — all this is not alchemy and the archaic symbolism in which love poems revel, but the plain simple course of evolution if normally environed. It is no mystery save the supreme mystery of spring-time and of growth. — *G. Stanley Hall.*

The best books from the evolutionist's standpoint are not necessarily those of the most elegant diction or startling phrase. They are not necessarily those of the most exhausting or complete catalogue of scientific facts, or the finest dissections of normal or diseased personality. They are true to life, as we say. They teem with the highest vitality. Their characters remain with us as friends and close companions and infect us with strength and courage. They not merely amuse or instruct, they build up and vivify.

Judged from this standpoint, no volume or library has such value as the Bible. . . . It is a record or picture of the experiences, feelings, and lives of strong men and women facing and overcoming doubt and fear, hardship and pain, temptation and trial, as we must do to-day. It teems with life and vigor, courage, hope, and faith, from cover to cover. — *John M. Tyler.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

Recall carefully the stories that have strongly influenced you since you passed the early adolescent period. Inquire of others as to similar experiences.

Make a brief list of stories of love that have a moral significance. Select one of these and attempt to condense it for presentation to a group of young people. If you do not succeed try another. Test its use and study results.

Make a similar test with stories of altruism from history, fiction, and modern life. Ask the young people with whom you are associated what novels that they have recently read they

have most enjoyed. Especially ask them to tell you the portions of the story that most impressed them. Note both the content of the stories that they tell and the way that the condensation is accomplished.

All this work will be much more profitable if it is cooperative study carried on in the story club or normal class.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

1. The development of social feeling in adolescence.
2. The interest in romantic love.
   a. The importance of reaching it directly.
   b. Its indirect relation to character.
   c. Some danger points.
3. Stories of altruistic life.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

George E. Dawson, *The Child and His Religion*, pp. 66–68, 76–77, 87–97.

CHAPTER XI

HOW TO USE STORIES

THE recent very marked development of interest in story-telling has led to the production of a considerable literature on the subject. To this the teacher of morals and religion who has just become interested in the use of stories will naturally turn for guidance. Much of it will be of very real value to him; some, however, is likely to lead him astray because it is the product of the experience of those who use stories for a purpose very different from his own. Some further words of warning and guidance have greater significance for this reason.

Seven different aims in story-telling may be defined. The first of these is that of most of the story-telling in home and social life. Its purpose is simply to add to the pleasure of those who listen. Much of the somewhat technical discussion of the short story in which the canons of literary art are applied to their construction and criticism clearly make this their dominant aim. This implies a point of view quite different from that of the teacher of morals, and the literary standards for the selection of material can not always be safely followed. Still it is true that what is genuinely artistic is usually pedagogically correct, and there is often much of helpful suggestion here as to method.

To make the lesson attractive is surely a legitimate aim provided that the fundamental question of its in-

fluence upon character has been settled first. The tactful use of stories certainly does make the lesson less formal and more pleasing to the average learner. The pupil approaches with pleasant anticipations the teacher who thus gives his lessons the touch of life in the concrete and of human interest, and the simple establishment of such a sympathetic and friendly relationship is a long step toward success in teaching. For this reason alone the teacher might well make considerable use of narration in his teaching work. The danger is that stories will be used that do not further the fundamental aim of the lesson. Where this happens there is a double blunder; the right story will be more pleasing as well as more effective in influencing character.

Story-telling of another kind seeks to introduce children to the best literature, and to guide the formation of habits of reading. This use of stories finds some exemplification in the schools, but is best illustrated in the story-telling that is now carried on in many public libraries. It consists largely in the presentation of samples of the literature for children that may be found upon the library shelves, though it is not confined to this alone where it is under the best leadership. The special plans that are suggested in this connection, except so far as they deal with method in story-telling, contain little that is of particular value to the Sunday-school teacher except as they can be utilized to bring children into acquaintance with the contents of the Sunday-school library. In settlements and similar institutions they may have a larger place.

A third use of stories, perhaps the most common in the schools, is in connection with language-study. Here much is made of the reproduction of the story by the pupil, and the instructions given in the best text-books and outlines of lesson plans are especially likely

to mislead the teacher of morals. A model lesson in one of the standard text-books on general method, which is largely used in normal schools, and to which Sunday-school teachers who take their work seriously sometimes turn for guidance, may be cited as an example. The teacher is instructed to tell a story (which can be related in five minutes) in eight sections, at the close of each one of which he is to pause while that portion is retold by the pupils, whose misconceptions are to be corrected. This is to be followed by repeated telling of each paragraph until all the children can repeat the story in good language, which, it is stated, will require several recitation periods of twenty minutes each. All this precedes an attempt to discover and enforce the moral lessons of the story. In case of a good story well told such formal application would be worse than useless; it is hardly necessary to suggest that if a story is presented as directed above the effort to make its moral content impressive must necessarily be a labored process. The error is in the confusion of the moral and the literary aim. If both are to be sought with the use of the same material the moral lesson from the story as a whole *must* precede the other.

A misguided effort to apply the important educational principle that teaches that impression from teacher or text-book should always be followed by expression from the pupil leads some of the most conscientious and intelligent Sunday-school teachers to fall into this error — for error it certainly is if results in character are what the teacher seeks. Where the purpose is to train the pupil in the use of correct language the principle is correctly applied, but the true " expression " of a moral lesson consists not in giving back its words but in manifesting its spirit in daily conduct.

Not only does this method fail to secure that result,

but it tends directly to hinder its accomplishment, for it centers attention upon the story's form and diverts it from its meaning. The impression that is left by a story that is used in moral education should be like that of a picture. If it is reproduced in very great detail by the pupil, and particularly if this is in response to questions by the teacher, this unified impression is likely to be lost, and for it is substituted a mass of relatively isolated details — something that resembles a museum rather than a picture, a catalogue rather than a story. If, however, the child reproduces the story in its entirety, and in his own way, no harm is done, for if the teacher's work has been successful he will emphasize the story's content rather than its form. Indeed it may well serve a valuable end, as the teacher will gain at least a hint as to what moral impression has been made.

One may fairly question whether even the training in language might not be more effectively accomplished in another way than that set forth above. As a means of culture of literary appreciation it ranks with the parsing of Gray's *Elegy* and the translating of Virgil as a second Latin text. For purposes of moral and religious education it would be almost equally ineffective.

Another use of stories in the schools is as a means of general intellectual training. Here the effort is to develop the reasoning powers and to foster the habit of mental alertness. With this aim in view the story is usually "developed" through questioning by the teacher. To follow such a method when one has a moral aim is as unfortunate a blunder as the one mentioned above. If the teacher pauses at a critical moment to ask, "What do think that he did next?" "How could you have escaped from such a place?" "Who can tell of a better way?" he may secure some clever guesses, but he spoils his story. The steady flow of thought and

feeling toward one particular end is checked; the impression already made is dissipated. The pupils' wits may have been sharpened, but their hearts have not been stirred.

The teacher who desires to know the effect upon the hearer of such impertinent interruption of the story's course can ascertain by a process of introspection while he listens to the story-teller who says, " And just as the bear grabbed him along came a man named Henry Jones. I think it was Henry Jones, but it may have been his brother John. There were six children in that family and all boys; I never could keep them straight. But probably it was Henry, for he always was loafing around with a gun. Well, just as the bear reached him, along came this man with a double-barrelled shotgun loaded with number-eight shot to kill woodcock. He always was hunting birds out of season!" etc.

It will aid the teacher to avoid some of these errors if he will remember that the question is as distinctly and as characteristically a device for stirring the intellectual powers as the story is for stimulating the feelings. There are, of course, times when the rhetorical question, one which the hearer is not expected to answer, but which serves to quicken and prolong curiosity, may be wisely used; but as a rule the story and the question are teaching devices that are not readily combined.

A fifth use of stories is for the purpose of illustration, in the strict use of the term, — that is, to aid the learner to gain a clear conception of some unfamiliar truth by calling to mind some well-known experience or fact and pointing out the likeness of the new idea to this one whose meaning has been mastered. This is not the place to discuss the value or the methods of illustration, but it is germane to say that the story is one of the most valuable, attractive, and readily obtained forms of illustration

that the teacher can use. In moral and religious teaching it is especially useful because it may at the same time aid to give clear conceptions of duty and stir the feelings that prompt to its performance. In this use of stories brevity is one of the chief essentials, and the drill in analysis and condensation that has been suggested in previous chapters will aid the teacher to the attainment of that terseness and pointedness that is a cardinal virtue in that kind of teaching.

Another use of stories is for the culture of the imagination and the esthetic feelings. It seeks to develop correct literary taste, and to train to an appreciation of the beautiful and the ideal in the whole environment of the child. Stories are often used with both this aim and one of those previously mentioned, but perhaps there is more frequent combination with the next, which is that of direct moral or religious influence. It is in substantially the same way that the story influences the hearer for the esthetic and the moral end, and suggestions as to the use of stories for the first aim will contain much to guide the teacher of morals to a correct method.

The direct moral and religious aim is the most important one of the Sunday-school teacher, is very prominent in the kindergarten, has some place and should have a larger one in the grades and in the high school, and is beginning to be appreciated by the Young Women's Christian Associations, the Young Men's Christian Associations (in the Boys' Branches at least), by settlements, vacation schools, playgrounds, and other institutions that have a moral aim.

This use of stories simply as stories, but with the aim of influencing conduct and character is the one that the writer has had chiefly in mind throughout the preceding chapters. It is the most important one for the Sunday-school teacher. He who learns to present the text of a

Bible lesson in the form of a well-told story instead of by the old-fashioned reading of "a verse about" will find that something has happened to his class. After such an introduction more detailed discussion may follow as seems profitable. The teacher who uses such a method will not be content to present only the Biblical material in that way, but will find many opportunities to introduce other story-material in the introduction to the lesson or in the final step of application. The method of Jesus will commend itself to those who test it fairly.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

The long story or poem peddled out in small instalments is an artistic and pedagogical absurdity. — *Percival Chubb.*

The inquiry is sometimes made, how such literature should be used in practical teaching. I would say that one's first duty to a story is to love it. Nothing in the way of discussion is legitimate that interferes with the prerogative of the young mind to absorb a story and to reproduce it in its own way. — *Richard G. Moulton.*

The anecdote in a sermon answers the purpose of an engraving in a book. — *Charles H. Spurgeon.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

As opportunity offers listen to story-telling in kindergartens, schools, libraries, social gatherings, etc., and carefully note both aims and methods. Compare both with your own. Reports of such visitation at the story club or training-class followed by general discussion of the facts reported will be especially valuable both for example and for warning.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

1. An opportunity and a danger.
2. Seven aims in story-telling, and their relations to moral education.

a. To entertain. How far legitimate in teaching?
b. To guide reading. How can it serve the moral purpose?
c. For purposes of language-study. How it may mislead the teacher of morals.
d. For intellectual discipline. The error of developing a story. The significance of the question as a teaching device.
e. For illustration. Special advantage of illustrative stories.
f. For esthetic culture. Relation to the moral aim.
g. For direct influence upon character.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

William Byron Forbush, *Manual of Stories*, pp. 135–142.
Richard T. Wyche, *Some Great Stories*, pp. 44–75.
E. N. and G. E. Partridge, *Story Telling for Home and School*, pp. 87–116.
Sara Cone Bryant, *Stories to Tell to Children*, pp. xxix–xlvii.
How to Tell Stories to Children, pp. 9–28.
Edna Lyman, *Story Telling*, pp. 79–88.
Julia Darrow Cowles, *The Art of Story Telling*, pp. 1–8, 16–21, 41–51, 94–99.

CHAPTER XII

THE SOURCES OF THE STORY'S POWER

FROM childhood we have all felt the story's influence; in what does it consist? In the preceding chapters we have noted some of the qualities that give it interest and have studied devices that add effectiveness in presentation; but we feel that back of this there is something that is more than all of these. When we search for it we are driven to the conclusion that it is the story itself. Beauty of literary form has an intrinsic charm for cultivated minds, but choice diction never stirred a heart or influenced a life. Empty nothings clothed in well-turned phrases are as disgusting to a healthy mind as the sight of an imbecile trigged out in the extreme of fashion. The story which lacks an inner spiritual quality is as devoid of power to stir a soul as are the sophomoric attempts at rondeaus, rondels, and triolets in which the college annuals abound. There is something that precedes method both in importance and in time. "First catch your rabbit" applies in story-telling as well as in cookery. If a story is to be told a first essential is a situation that appeals to human interest, and some sort of a hint at a solution of a problem in human life.

But the story outweighs in influence the homily which still more directly deals with material of just this sort; there is some element of power in the story form. This is doubtless partly a matter of concreteness of pres-

entation. All children and many adults of the less cultured class find it at least relatively difficult to master an abstract principle. It is the specific and concrete and that which is associated with human interests rather than general ideas logically arranged that find ready entrance to their minds. The average man will get a truer idea of the Middle Ages from *Ivanhoe* than from Hallam's history. Not only will the story awaken larger interest, but from it he will carry away more knowledge. That which is presented is apperceived more fully. In teaching morals to these people the same principles obtain. They are guided in their choices by impulse and habit rather than by reason. They have not studied conduct in its deeper relations, comparing motive with motive, choice with choice, issue with issue, sufficiently to rise to general moral principles except of the simplest kind. It follows that when such principles are presented by others they can not make a strong appeal to them.

Even if a principle has been accepted in general terms it is not always easy for the untrained mind to apply it accurately to the varied situations of daily life. In child life this finds frequent illustration. A boy or girl will accept a general statement of duty, but when the attempt is made to apply it to his own conduct he will deny its authority if it conflicts with his own preference. This is not due simply to the fact that the child's selfish impulses are strong, but also to the difficulty of translating an abstract statement of duty into terms of conduct. Here the story helps. If well told it suggests the principle, but often, and particularly if it is of the realistic type, it makes the application clear beyond a doubt.

But the story does more than point out what conduct ought to be. Laws and other disciplinary rules will accomplish that. While the specific " Thou shalt nots " of the Old Testament mean more to the child than Jesus'

summary of the law, they are often powerless to control. There are persons who accept the justice of the eighth commandment, and who admit the obligation to obey it, but who sometimes steal. The law is not effective at such times because an element with which it does not deal has entered in. This is what we call temptation, an emotional experience. The law deals with fact: the story adds an appeal to the feelings, and so deals with motives as well as with deeds.

It is this element of emotional appeal, one of the vital characteristics of the story, that chiefly gives it moral power. It is the source of interest, first of all. When a reviewer uses the terms "thrilling," "sensational," "romantic," "dull," "prosy," "commonplace," in his description of a novel, he attempts to indicate the quality and force of the feelings which it stirs. Our attitude toward books that we have not read is largely determined by such descriptions. The novels that we read again and again are those that stir us deeply, though they may not be at all of the sensational type.

But more than the rousing of interest is involved in the ordinary emotional response to a good story. How often has the reader found his heart beating rapidly, his breathing suppressed, his hands clenched, or his eyes filled with tears as he followed the words of some master story-teller. While he read or listened he has unconsciously identified himself with the hero of the tale, has felt his disappointments and shared his aspirations, and has experienced the same feelings of indignation toward his enemies and contempt for their motives. Not only has a certain course of conduct been definitely and vividly set before him, but the impulse to act in harmony with it has been stirred. All the energy of the moral life is in the feelings, and the story stirs these as law and even exhortation never can.

SOURCES OF THE STORY'S POWER

Several sources of influence have already appeared, but we have not yet reached the end of our quest. As the story is more than its form, so one might almost say that the story-teller is more than the story itself. Since the power of the story is chiefly in its emotional appeal, the story-teller's manifest feeling is an important factor in the impression that is made. It is precisely because it is interpreted by a human personality that the story that is told is better than the one that is read.

So true is this that what under ordinary circumstances would seem but a trivial happening becomes a tragedy that moves one to tears when it is related by one to whom it was full of painful meaning. He who repeats the story, if he has grasped its significance and has felt it deeply, can give it something like the same power to stir the heart of the hearer; otherwise it is again a mere commonplace incident of daily life. So it is that one who has grasped the subtle spiritual significance of an allegorical tale so responds to its message that by every tone of voice and expression of face he greatly reinforces its power.

The practical suggestion that these facts offer to one who would make successful story-telling a part of his art of teaching is that whatever adds to his appreciation of the meaning or importance of a story will add to its effectiveness as told. Until one has entered into the spirit of a tale he cannot tell it well. It is partly because of the increased response to the spiritual essence of the story that the one that is oft told becomes a more impressive one. Its scenes come to be visualized more clearly; its characters take on a more definite personality; its meaning is hinted in minor incidents as a man's character is revealed in trivial acts. It is because of this almost instinctive response to the story itself that some persons can tell a story well without recourse to

the methods that have been suggested for the student's guidance in the preceding chapters of this book. It is this that Professor Moulton has in mind when he says that the teacher's first duty is to love the story. If he does, giving it form will not be a serious problem. Good taste and subtle harmonies come almost without effort, as when a mother clothes a child that she really loves. If the story is but the opportunity for the display of brilliant diction the product of the teller's art is like a vulgar display of tasteless finery on the overdressed child of those who would advertise their newly-acquired wealth.

One or two practical applications of these facts may well be pointed out. One who takes his story-telling seriously cannot afford to content himself with the study of other persons' adaptations of the world's great stories. Let him go to the masters who created them, or who gave them classic form, for their spirit and their meaning. Then, when he has saturated himself with the feeling which they stir he may turn to others for aid as to condensation and presentation of the tales for a special audience. It is rarely that the results do not warrant the effort that this costs.

Again, one may well remember that one's favorite story is usually one's best. This at once suggests that every teacher has a large fund of as yet unused material, and this is of the richest kind. Whatever one has deeply felt will appeal to many others if it is rightly presented. The stories that have moved you are the ones through which *you*, if not another, can best stir other hearts. The novels that you remember, the characters in history that stand out, the incidents of every-day life that stirred your sympathy or admiration, the friends that you have loved, the choices that shaped your own character, these are the things that shaped into simple stories will go from your lips to the hearts of those that listen. Patiently

and faithfully give them the form that will best reveal the message that they brought to you, and then use them with confidence; and use them over and over again, for with these stories you will give yourself.

Moralizing all men resent; from experience they learn without a murmur. Why is it that the story's lessons so readily go home if not because its teaching method is so near to that by which the earliest and most important lessons of every-day life are learned? It is at root but learning by the experience of another. The story — what is it but a bit of life translated into words? If the story is your own, it is no longer a transcript; it is life itself.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

When you make a story your own and tell it, the listener gets the story plus your appreciation of it. — *Sara Cone Bryant.*

Our first duty to a Bible story is to love it; its effect we may leave to the divine Artist. — *Richard G. Moulton.*

It is not the story in the lesson quarterly that you can build into the lives of your class; it is the story in you. — *Walter L. Hervey.*

But the secret of good story-telling lies not in following rules, not in analyzing processes, not even in imitating good models, though all these are necessary, but first of all in being *full* — full of the story, the picture, the children; and then from being morally and spiritually up to concert pitch, which is the true source of power in anything. From these come spontaneity; what is within must come out; the story tells itself; and out of your fullness the children receive. — *Ibid.*

Christ's words, spoken by Plato or Aristotle, would not have been "spirit and life." — *Marvin R. Vincent.*

HINTS FOR FIRST-HAND STUDY

Carefully observe the attitude of good story-tellers toward the different stories that they tell. Ask your story-telling friends

what stories they like best, and note whether they are the ones that their hearers most enjoy.

Work up some of your own experiences for telling as stories, and test their effect. In searching for suitable material consider such subjects as the happiest experience of your childhood or youth, some conscious wrong-doing which brought you suffering or repentance, some great sorrow of your life and its lessons, the bravest thing that you ever knew a boy or girl to do, the most pathetic incident in real life that you ever saw, etc.

Make similar tests with the stories that you have greatly enjoyed, or which have greatly influenced you, if necessary cutting down and condensing whole novels to suitable length for telling.

OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE TOPIC

1. Sources of power in the story itself.
   - *a.* Concreteness and definiteness of teaching.
   - *b.* Interest in the lesson as so presented.
   - *c.* Appeal to the feelings which prompt to action.
2. The influence of the story-teller's own response to the story.
3. Some ways of gaining this added power.
   - *a.* Faithful study of the story.
   - *b.* Going to original sources.
   - *c.* Telling one's own stories.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON THIS TOPIC

Richard T. Wyche, *The Story Hour*, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 12–14; No. 6, pp. 8–12.

Sara Cone Bryant, *Stories to Tell to Children*, pp. ix–xii.

E. N. and G. E. Partridge, *Story Telling for Home and School*, pp. 24–32.

CHAPTER XIII

WHERE TO FIND STORIES

"WHERE can I find good stories?" is one of the first and most insistent questions that the beginner asks. When he has fully developed the true story-teller's spirit he will find them everywhere — in novels, history, and poetry; in the magazines, and even in the daily papers; in his own past, and in the lives of his friends. Knowing that whatever brings a message to him may carry a message to another, he will translate his own experiences, whether they come by way of reading or of life, into story form, and will not lack material. In most of us, however, the attitude of mind that makes this possible must grow. It feeds upon the reading or hearing of well-told tales, and finds exercise for its immaturity in the telling of stories that have already been given form by others.

The following suggestions are designed to aid beginners in this way — but not for that alone. It would be the height of folly for any teacher, however skilful he may be in discovering new material, to ignore the old favorites that have become such simply because they have appealed so strongly to many generations of men. These the teacher should use not simply for his own training, but as well because they are the racial heritage of each new generation of children.

The effort to prepare a universally satisfactory list of stories for use in moral and religious education would be

a hopeless task, because of the varying tastes of those who would be expected to use it. The last chapter in this book pointed out the fact that the choice of the best stories for a particular teacher's use is an intensely personal matter. The writer feels satisfied if he finds two stories that he cares to use in his teaching work in one of the collections of the average kind. Others, without doubt, will gather a larger harvest, for they will bring other interests to the choice, and will apply other standards which are quite as worthy as his own. Since the selection of stories must be so largely a matter of individual choice, collections of stories rather than particular tales will be mentioned here.

The chief difficulties that appear in the preparation of such a bibliography are due to the superabundance of material. The most useless list that could be prepared would be one that contained all the material that is available. The number of titles would be confusing, and many books selected at random from among them by the teacher would have little value for the experienced story-teller and still less for the beginner. Hence the aim will be to select a few of the best books from a number of groups, keeping the needs of the novice especially in mind.

A considerable number of lists of stories, designed chiefly for the use of teachers and those in charge of children's libraries, have been published. A good bibliography of these lists is found in *Helps in Library Work with Children*, which may be obtained free of charge by application to the State Board of Education, The Capitol, Hartford, Conn.

The Story Teller's Magazine, which is published by The Story Tellers Company, 27 West 23d St., New York, contains both stories and articles on Story-Telling, together with news of the Story Teller's Leagues. The subscription price is $1.00 per year.

Among the lists of stories and of collections of stories most likely to be serviceable to those who will seek information from this list are the following:

Index to Short Stories, by Grace E. Salisbury and Marie E. Beckwith; Rowe, Peterson & Co., Chicago, 1907; $.50. Stories are alphabetically indexed according to the subjects, with references to the books in which they are found. There are 22 stories on courage, 24 on contentment, 49 on Christmas, 6 on gratitude, 19 on kindness, 3 on courtesy, etc. Several hundred topics appear in the list.

A List of Good Stories to Tell to Children Under Twelve Years of Age, Carnegie Library of Pittsburg, $.05. There are references to books in which the stories may be found. The list includes 25 Bible stories, 16 fables, 14 myths, 14 Christmas stories, 7 Thanksgiving stories, etc.

Finding List of Fairy Tales and Folk Stories, Boston Public Library, 1908; $.05. About 100 volumes are indexed in this list.

Selected Books for Boys, by C. B. Kern; Y. M. C. A. Press, New York, 1907, $.15. An annotated list of books, chiefly for boys between 10 and 16 years of age.

Books for Boys; Work with Boys, Dec. 1909, Fall River, Mass.; $.25. A revision of an earlier valuable list.

Annotated Book List for the Use of Probation Officers of the Marion County Juvenile Court, Indianapolis. The moral aim is dominant here.

Books That Girls Like, Brooklyn Public Library.

Two good general collections of stories of various kinds and for children of various ages, well selected and very well told, are found in *How to Tell Stories to Children* and

BIBLE STORIES

Jesus the Carpenter and *Joseph the Dreamer*, by Robert Bird; Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York, 1901; $1.50 each. Rarely beautiful diction in the descriptive passages and beautiful feeling throughout. Many of the stories are not suitable for children.

Children's Treasury of Bible Stories, by Mrs. Herman Gaskoin; The Macmillan Co., New York, 1896; 3 parts, $.35 each. Very good.

Child's Christ Tales, by Andrea Hofer Proudfoot; published by the author, Chicago; $1.00. The stories are well told for children of kindergarten age.

Kindergarten Bible Stories, by Laura E. Cragin; Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, 1905; $1.25. Fifty-six of the Old Testament stories. There is a companion volume of New Testament stories.

Old Stories of the East, by James Baldwin; American Book Co., New York & Chicago, 1896; $.45. Fresh and interesting versions of the familiar Old Testament stories.

Tell me a True Story, by Mary Stewart; published by Fleming H. Revell Co., New York, 1909; $1.25.

The Garden of Eden, *The Castle of Zion*, and *When the King Came*, by George Hodges; published by Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1904 and later, $1.20 to $1.50. Splendid fresh versions of the old Bible stories.

FAIRY-TALES AND FOLK-TALES

The familiar collections of the Grimm brothers, of Andrew Lang, and of Joseph Jacobs contain the cream of the old favorites. Many among those found in these books will not be useful for moral education, but a considerable number will well serve the teacher's purpose. Fresher material will be found in the following books:

The Dwarfs' Tailor and other Fairy Tales by Zoe Dana Underhill; published by Harper & Brothers, New York, 1896; $1.75. Contains 22 stories, several unusually good ones among them.

Nature Myths and Stories, by Flora J. Cooke; A. Flanagan Co., Chicago, 1895; $.35. There are a number of good stories for the teacher's use.

The City that Never was Reached and *The Golden Goblet*, by Jay T. Stocking; published by The Pilgrim Press, Boston; $1.00 each. Modern myths and fairy tales unusually well told and with strong moral values.

The Golden Spears, by Edmund Leamy; published by D. Fitzgerald, New York, 1911; $1.00.

Many good folk-tales may be found by searching the reports of the U. S. Bureau of Ethnology and other anthropological literature. A large number of especially good tales of this class will be found among the *Marchen* that appear in the easy German texts prepared for use in high schools. D. C. Heath & Co. of Boston publish a number of these that are especially good.

GENERAL COLLECTIONS FOR KINDERGARTEN USE

The Story Hour, by Kate Douglas Wiggin; Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1899; $1.00. Good stories and a suggestive introduction on story-telling.

In the Child's World, by Emilie Poulsson; Milton Bradley Co., Springfield, Mass., 1893; $2.00.

Half a Hundred Stories for the Little People, by various authors; Milton Bradley Co., Springfield, Mass.; $.75.

Mother Stories and *More Mother Stories*, by Maud Lindsay; published by Milton Bradley Co., Springfield, Mass., 1908, 1910, pp. 182, 183; $1.00. Highly valued by kindergartners, and significant as a part of the kindergarten program, but simply as stories most of them are of little

value for purposes of moral and religious education. Both the settings and the symbolism are often beyond the child's comprehension. In their form they are rarely beautiful illustrations of good story-telling.

MYTHS

Hawthorne's *Wonder Tales* and Kingsley's *Greek Heroes* may be found in many editions. Fresher material or special adaptations may be found in the following books:

In Mythland, by M. Helen Beckwith; Educational Publishing Co., Boston, 1896; $.40. Greek myths told for children of kindergarten grade.

Stories of the Red Children, by Dorothy Brooks; Educational Publishing Co., Boston, 1896; $.40. These are American Indian myths told for children of kindergarten and primary grades.

Norse Stories Retold from the Eddas, by Hamilton Wright Mabie; Dodd, Mead & Co., N. Y., 1882; $2.00.

FABLES

Fables and Folk Stories, edited by H. E. Scudder; Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1882; $.60.

Æsop's Fables, edited by Joseph Jacobs; The Macmillan Co., New York; $1.50.

LEGENDS

Child's Book of Saints, by William Canton; E. P. Dutton, New York, 1907; cloth $.40, leather $.80.

Book of Legends, by H. E. Scudder; Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1900; $.50.

Many good legends that are suitable for telling as stories will be found in the poems of Longfellow, Tennyson, and other poets.

The Book of Saints and Friendly Beasts, by Abbie Farwell Brown; published by Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1901, pp. 225; $1.20.

Our Island Saints, by Amy Steedman; published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1912; $2.50.

ALLEGORICAL STORIES

Many especially good allegorical stories are found in *The Golden Windows* and *The Silver Crown* by Laura E. Richards; Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1906; $1.00 each. Every teacher should know these charming stories. They are as near perfection as any of their class that can be found. Some are very suitable for young children, but the majority are better suited to use with adolescents and adults.

Parables from Nature, by Mrs. Gatty, which may be found in a number of editions, contains many good allegorical stories.

Story-Tell Lib, by Annie Trumbull Slosson; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1902; $.50. Half a dozen very good allegorical stories told in rustic dialect.

TRUE HERO STORIES

The Splendid Quest, by Basil Mathews; published by Jarrold & Sons, London. Ten hero stories, only one or two of which are legendary.

Fifty Famous Stories Retold and *Thirty More Famous Stories Retold*, by James Baldwin; published by American Book Co., New York, 1903 and 1905, $.35 and $.50. Hero stories, many of them historical.

Book of Golden Deeds, by Charlotte Yonge; various editions. Many splendid tales of heroic deeds.

Plutarch's *Lives of Illustrious Men*, which may be found in various editions, contains much valuable material. The stories will require much selection and condensation.

STORIES OF ALTRUISM

Many stories of this class will be found among those contained in the books mentioned above, particularly among the hero-stories and legends. History, biography, and the standard novels will afford much such material. *Servants of the King*, by Robert E. Speer, published by the Young People's Missionary Movement, New York, 1909, contains eleven stories of the lives of Christian missionaries. They were prepared especially for young people in middle adolescence, and are well suited to their purpose.

A LIST OF BOOKS ON STORY TELLING

Carolyn Sherwin Bailey, *For the Story Teller;* Milton Bradley Co., Springfield, Mass., 1913, pp. 261; $1.50. A distinctly original book. It discusses story-telling to young children, chiefly from the standpoint of general educational values, but with special attention to children's interests and to method. It contains a large number of especially good illustrative stories, and very carefully selected references to many others.

Sara Cone Bryant, *How to Tell Stories to Children* and *Stories to Tell to Children;* Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1905 and 1907; $1.00 each. Thoroughly helpful discussions of values and methods in story-telling appear in each book. The bulk of each volume is made up of well selected stories which are retold from many sources.

William Byron Forbush, *Manual of Stories;* by George W. Jacobs & Co., Philadelphia, 1915, pp. 310; $1.50. By very abundant quotations and paraphrases the most im-

portant contributions of earlier works are well presented, and detailed discussion of several interesting devices is added. There are numerous illustrative stories. The extended bibliographies and lists of stories are especially valuable.

Walter L. Hervey, *Picture Work;* H. H. Otis & Sons, Buffalo, 1903, pp. 91; $.25. A very valuable brief discussion of illustrative teaching with splendid concise hints on story-telling.

Clara W. Hunt, *What Shall We Read to the Children;* Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1915, pp. 156; $1.00. Deals incidentally with types of stories and their values.

Angela M. Keyes, *Stories and Story Telling;* D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1911; $1.25.

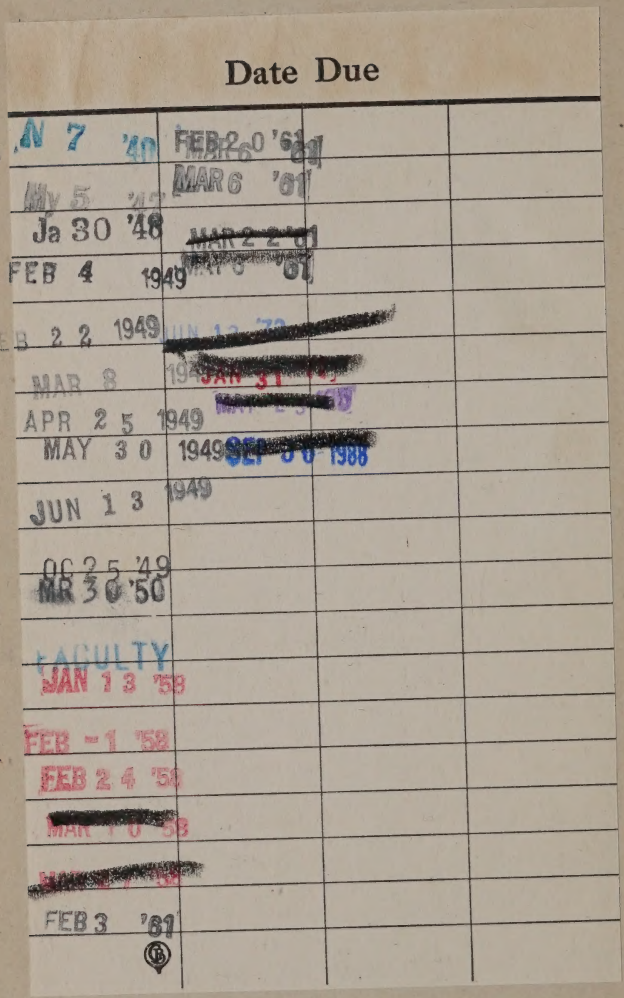
Edna Lyman, *Story Telling: What to Tell, and How to Tell It;* A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago, 1910, pp. 229; $.75. The book discusses stories suitable for reading and telling to children and gives examples of the kinds recommended. There is little discussion of moral education, but many of the stories have distinct moral values.

E. N. & G. E. Partridge, *Story Telling for Home and School;* Sturgis & Walton Co., New York, 1912, pp. 323; $1.25. A discussion of story-telling from the educational point of view, but with rather more of consideration for the story than for the child. More valuable for suggestions in general education than for the moral and religious aim. The book contains eighteen retold stories and a bibliography.

Richard T. Wyche, *Some Great Stories and How to Tell Them;* Newsom & Co., New York, 1910, pp. 182; $1.00. The founder and president of the National Story Tellers' League here presents his thought as to the value and methods of story-telling and suggests a number of the stories which he has so succcessfully told in hundreds of educational gatherings. There is especial emphasis upon epic stories.

To see the shine of souls, see angels shy
Among the faces of the passers-by.
I do not ask for sweeter music than
The common, daily Symphony of Man.

Stories are the natural soul-food for children, their native air and vital breath; but our children are too often either story-starved or charged with ill-chosen or ill-adapted twaddle-tales. — *G. Stanley Hall.*



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MAR 8 1949	~~JAN 3 1 '69~~		
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MAY 3 0 1949	~~SEP 3 0 1988~~		
JUN 1 3 1949			
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MR 3 0 '50			
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